THE PANDITA AND THE SIDDHA

TIBETAN STUDIES IN HONOUR OF E. GENE SMITH

EDITED BY RAMON N. PRATS

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Preface

I first met with Ellis Gene Smith in 1977, when I rang the doorbell of his beautiful house in South Extension, New Delhi. I was accompanied by Raffaella, my wife, and we were led into a huge living hall by Mr. Smith's assistant, Mangaram Ji, a young Indian man with whom we were soon to become very familiar. At the time, Gene Smith was Deputy Director of the U.S. Library of Congress Field Office in India and I was a doctoral candidate in Tibetan studies for the "Orientale" University of Naples, where I conducted my studies under Professor Namkhai Norbu, Rinpoche, whom I followed also as a disciple. I bore a letter that Professor Luciano Petech, my thesis supervisor, had written to introduce me to the celebrated American scholar and I conveyed to him also Prof. Norbu's regards. That was the beginning of a long and enriching relationship that soon developed into an abiding friendship with the man who more than anyone else has contributed decisively to the preservation and accessibility of Tibetan literature since the 1950s. From that very first meeting, a new dimension of research – in which the profusion of Tibetan texts would play a central role – began to unfold before me, adding to the linguistic and religious teaching I had received from Rinpoche and the strict methodology I had learned under Prof. Petech. Gene Smith's encyclopedic knowledge (Lokesh Chandra defined him once as "a library on foot"), along with his unfailing kindness, proverbial generosity, and unstinting help, were and still are unique. It is my hope that my contribution as editor of this book in his honor, modest a contribution though it may be, may serve as a small token of my deep admiration, esteem, and gratitude.

Just like me, many other specialists in the field of Tibetan studies at large are indebted to Gene Smith in various and multiple ways. The fond memories of him written by some of the authors of this volume bear fervent witness to this.

The idea of preparing a Felicitation Volume to commemorate E. Gene Smith's sixty-fifth birthday was discussed by a group of his closest friends and colleagues during the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies held in Leiden in June 2000. The project met with an enthusiastic reply. Yet with little more than a year left before the book was to be presented, time proved too short. By the summer of 2001 only a CD-ROM with a preliminary editing of the articles could be prepared, and this was presented to him.

After that, the publication of the miscellany entered a long, tortuous journey that was halted by a number of vicissitudes, the saddest of which was the untimely death of William Hinman (one of my employers at Sky Dancer Press and a supporter of Gene Smith's institute, the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center), who had agreed to sponsor the publication of the volume personally. Finally, five years later, older and – hopefully – wiser, we are able to assemble metaphorically in this pages and present Gene Smith with an edition of *The Pandita and the Siddha* as a tribute of our high esteem and affection.

Tibetologists – and Tibetans – owe E. Gene Smith much more than can be conveyed in a few words. His unusual career as the world's leading scholar of Tibetan and Buddhist literature began in 1960 at the University of Washington, Seattle, where he enrolled as a graduate student in the Inner Asia project of the Far Eastern and Russian Institute. He studied there with notable scholars such as Turrell V. Wylie, Edward Conze, Joseph F. Rock, Nicholas Poppe, and above all with Dezhung Rinpoche, a fine Buddhist erudite and exponent of the Tibetan cultural heritage. This venerable lama was one of the eight Tibetan political refugees of the aristocratic Sakyapa family who, like many other thousands of Tibetans, had fled their homeland in 1959. The Sakyapa group had been initially invited to the United States for a three-year cultural research project conducted at the University of Washington under the auspices of a Rockefeller Foundation grant (other eight academic centers worldwide were also funded during the same time period by the Rockefeller Foundation to promote Tibetan studies). Yet Gene Smith not only followed Dezhung Rinpoche at the University: he lived in fact, the only Westerner, in the Sakyapa home in Seattle. The advantages of such a full immersion in a Tibetan framework were really remarkable for Gene-La. "If you want to learn a language, stay around children – they never hesitate to correct you! – and women – they are used to speaking to children," he would advise me years later. Gene absorbed Tibetan Buddhism and culture from Rinpoche

and his associates until 1964, when he completed his Ph.D. qualifying exams and moved to the State University of Leiden for advanced studies in Sanskrit. However, resource materials in the Tibetan language were very limited at the time, and Gene's quest for original texts led him to their source. The following year he was awarded a Ford Foundation grant to travel to India and Nepal in order to study and conduct research with some of the great lamas of the different Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Among these were Drukpa Thukse Rinpoche, Khenpo Noryang, and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. Gene's fieldwork included scouring the rare book collections, libraries, and archives of Buddhist monasteries and temples as well as some of the private collections of the Lamas – an activity that decisively marked, and matched, his academic inclination. Having decided to remain in India to further his fieldwork, in 1968 he joined the United States' Library of Congress (L.C.) Overseas Operations Division in New Delhi as Tibetan acquisition expert and cataloger. His progress there was nothing short of brilliant and he was appointed its Field Director in 1980. Through his painstaking effort and personal encouragement, the L.C. developed the PL-480 program set in 1963 to support the reprinting and acquisition of rare Tibetan and Himalayan manuscripts and xylographs that were subsequently distributed to twenty subscribing institutions throughout the United States. By the 1970s, this trend had proven seminal for the growth of Tibetan studies as a serious academic discipline in American as well as European universities. Having heard of the program overseen by the already renowned Gene-La, Tibetan refugees or members of the Tibetan-speaking communities in the Himalayan areas in India, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan visited him day after day, bringing to his knowledgeable attention and careful examination many literary treasures that under other circumstances would simply have vanished. Under Gene Smith's aegis, the rich Tibetan literary heritage found protectorate status and began to become accessible.

It was in those years that Gene Smith's successive homes in New Delhi became a legendary institute of sorts for many visiting scholars and serious students or researchers from all over the world. Gene was unique not only for his exceptional hospitality but also for sharing his huge and growing library and especially for sharing his unmatched knowledge of Tibetan letters, his constant mentoring, and unstinting assistance (oftentimes in the form of books, if not his personal notes) to different generations of Tibetologists.

More than 5,000 works in the Tibetan language on traditional Buddhist religious literature, art, history, poetry, biographies, linguistics, medicine, Bon, etc., were published under the PL-480 program until 1985, when Gene Smith left India for Jakarta to direct the L.C. Southeast Asian program. In 1994 he was assigned to the L.C. Middle Eastern Office in Cairo, where he remained until he took early retirement in February 1997. After a brief tenure in New York City as consultant to the Trace Foundation to establish the Himalayan and Inner Asian Resources, Gene Smith and a group of friends and colleagues founded the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (www.TBRC.org) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in December 1999. Gene's long-cherished project relocated to New York City in 2002, where it is now associated with the Rubin Museum of Art. Through his post as Executive Director, he is tirelessly leading the impressive TBRC project of digitizing thousands of texts and reference materials, and building a database on the field that is of incalculable value.

A reflection of Gene Smith's outstanding command of Tibetan Buddhist literature are the scholarly introductions, prefaces, and elaborated lists of contents that he authored during his years in India to accompany the reproduction of a large number of Tibetan texts, which constitute a precious resource for any researcher. A selection was published in 2001 under the title *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau* (Boston: Wisdom Publications), a magnum opus of modern Tibetology. In addition to these, several more of his introductory writings – not all of which bear Gene Smith's name explicitly – deserve to be considered. Though much shorter, they are no less valuable. To list only a few:

Sa gsum na mgon par mtsho ba rdo rje sgra dbyangs gling gi zhal 'don bskang gso'i rim pa phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa'i ngo mtshar nor bu'i 'phreng ba skal bzang gzhon nu'i mgul rgyan: The collected liturgical texts of Gnas-chung Rdo-rje-sgra-dbyangs-gling, the residence of the State Oracle of Tibet. Gangtok: Sonam T. Kazi (Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab, 3), 1969, pp. 1-4.

The Collected Writings (Gsung-'bum) of 'Bri-gung Chos-rje 'Jig-rten-mgon-po Rin-chen-dpal (5 vols.). New Delhi: Khangsar Tulku, Vol. 1, 1969, pp. 1-4.

Collected Works of Thu'u-bkwan Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-nyi-ma (10 vols.). Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1969, Vol. I, pp. 1-12 and Appendixes, pp. 1-7.

Three Karchacks: Lha ldan sprul pa'i gtsug lag khang gi dkar chag shel dkar me long (1645) by the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho – Grwa sa chen po bzhi dang rgyud pa stod smad chags tshul pad dkar 'phreng ba (1744) by Phur-bu-lcog Ngag-dbang-byams-pa – and Gangs can gyi ljongs su bka' dang bstan bcos sogs kyi glegs bam spar gzhi ji ltar yod pa rnam nas dkar chag spar thor phyogs tsam du bkod pa phan bde'i pad tshal 'byed pa'i nyin byed. New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo (Gedan Sungrab Minyam Gyunphel Series, 13), 1970, pp. 1-6.

Buryat Annotations on the Lam rim. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture (Śata-piṭaka Series, 97), 1973, pp. 1-3.

The production of *The Pandita and the Siddha* is indebted to those authors who have contributed articles to the present volume. As editor, I wish to express my gratitude to each of them. Special thanks are due also to Tashi Tsering, Director of the Amnye Machen Institute (McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala), who took on the responsibility of publisher. And finally, many thanks to Roberto Vitali who not only acted as a most effective and decisive link on behalf of the Amnye Machen Institute, but also collaborated and helped untiringly in many ways throughout all these years to keep the project ongoing until its very final stage.

Ramon N. Prats
Barcelona
February 2006

Publisher's Note

In June 2000, at the Ninth IATS Conference in Leiden, Dr. Ramon Prats and I revived the idea of dedicating a Festschrift to Gene Smith and decided to bring it out on the occasion of his 65th birthday. The decision brought to an end several years of consultations with some of Gene's friends and colleagues. I felt a Festschrift was an appropriate homage to his knowledge and integrity which I came to appreciate during the many years of our interaction.

This began in 1979, when, at the behest of the late Rai Bahadur T. D. Densapa (Burmiok Athing), OBE of Sikkim, then the doyen of Tibetan Studies in the Indian Subcontinent, and of his son Tashi Densapa (presently the Director of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in Gangtok), I was assisting and interpreting for Prof. Emeritus Franz Michael and Prof. Eugene Kenez during their field research based on Max Weber theory and the Tibetan theocracy. We interviewed Tibetan scholars and elders in Rajpur, Mussoorie and Ladakh.

It was upon completion of this research phase that I first chanced upon meeting the legendary Gene Smith. I was also invited to the dinner he hosted in honour of the Professors on 30 July 1979 at D-29 South Extension Part II, his residence in New Delhi. Like several other scholars I began then to be acquainted with his untiring efforts in preserving Tibetan literature.

The field of Tibetan and Buddhist studies is indebted to Gene for his central role in initiating the publishing of Tibetan texts in the subcontinent from the mid-1960s under the Library of Congress PL-480 program. It was through Gene's guidance and encouragement as Field Director of the Library's South Asian headquarters that individuals in the Tibetan Diaspora started reproducing and publishing ancient Tibetan literature. Between the mid-1960s and 1985 at least 6,000 titles of Tibetan works, some of which comprised up to thirty volumes, were published.

Through revitalizing the Library of Congress Acquisition Program of Tibetan books from the Diaspora and Sikkimese, Ladakhi, Mongolian and Bhutanese publishers, Gene collected and made available a diverse and indispensable corpus of materials for the understanding and advancement of Tibetan Studies internationally.

After Gene left Delhi in September 1985 the program was halted but his commitment never wavered and he returned to Delhi to help the new Field Director re-establish it in 1990. It was on his suggestion that I acted as a consultant for the Tibetan Program to the Library of Congress in New Delhi.

Gene's ground-breaking role at encouraging the Tibetan Diaspora to publish their literature in the Indian subcontinent even had an indirect impact within China. In July 1982 the PRC government for the first time allowed their Tibetologists to participate in the 2nd IATS Conference at Columbia University, New York. At the conference, the scholars and government authorities from China were amazed to see for the first time the number of volumes of Tibetan works reproduced in exile and were urged to establish a competing program. In the following years the PRC experienced a resurgence in the publication of Tibetan texts.

Following his early retirement, Gene's pioneering work in Tibetan Studies has continued with his creation of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre (TBRC) in New York. He has tirelessly located, collected and scanned thousands of rare and not so rare texts from Tibet, China, India and Nepal, using his own collection as a starting point, to make them digitally available to scholars worldwide. To date, TBRC's Digital Library holds a vast fully searchable archive of approximately 4 million images.

Whether in lengthy articles, well written and informative introductions or other works, when it comes to acknowledging help from fellow scholars or teachers, Gene Smith is the finest example of intellectual honesty among all Tibetologists and Buddhist scholars. And when it comes upon him to help fellow scholars, his non-attachment to the most rare and important literary works leads him to share his material and findings, always of the highest standard, with anyone who needs them. Indeed from the mid-1960s to September 1985 Gene's place was an open house, meeting point and haven for all scholars and students of Tibetan, Himalayan, Nepalese and Indian studies.

Since my first meeting with him almost thirty years ago, Gene has a been a personal mentor and a source of great inspiration. I was priviledged to offer him a small token of my appreciation when I was the Head of the Publication Department of LTWA. The Biography of the First Tre Hor Khang gsar Skyabs mgon Blo bzang Tshul khrims Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1838-1897) was dedicated to him on the occasion of his 60th birthday. I wrote then:

> This volume is dedicated to the foremost bibliographer of Tibetan texts,
> E.Gene Smith, on his sixtieth bithday,
> for opening up the literary treasures of Tibet to the rest of the world
> and for his preeminent contribution to the advancement of Tibetan and Buddhist studies.

Now, it is for his knowledge of Tibetan culture and boundless altruism in sharing information and texts that I am publishing this volume in his honour.

I close with a few matters about this Festschrift. I felt particularly honoured when Ramon Prats asked me in August 2002 to take up publication of the volume at the Amnye Machen Institute. I gladly accepted to publish it as a small personal sign of my gratitude towards Gene.

The release of the volume comes after a long time, delayed as it was by several practical problems which prevented the editor from delivering the final draft. In the meantime the contributors were asked to make any changes they deemed necessary to their articles. The final version was delivered in March 2006, but pending work for that year and a few technical problems encountered by the printer led to a final layout only in early 2007.

I wish to thank here the contributors, on behalf of the editor too, for their patience and understanding. They have waited for so long. So has Gene, who never asked me about the book. My gratitude also goes to Ven. Mathieu Ricard who has been so kind to cover part of the publication costs and to Dr. Richard Whitecross who volunteered his services when the editor thought that the English of some articles should be checked, which in the end was not necessary. Many thanks also to Indraprastha Press (New Delhi) for volunteering a rough first layout in Summer 2007. Finally I would like to thank my old friend Robi Vitali for putting so much of his time into keeping the project alive, finding solutions when the book was at a standstill and for making the Festschrift ready today. Without his help the book would have not seen the light of day.

The reader is kindly requested to note that the stylistic idiosyncrasies used by each author have been preserved as in their original articles. The classic criterion of making notes, italics, transliterations or bibliographies consistent throughout the volume has been dropped in light of the fact that every author has reasons to opt for the solutions they favour.

Tashi Tsering

NOTES ON THE *RGYAL RIGS* OF NGAWANG AND THE CLAN HISTORY OF EASTERN BHUTAN AND SHAR MON

John Ardussi
(Issaquah, Washington)

It is a distinct pleasure to join in honoring Gene Smith, one of the most influential scholars to emerge from the Tibetan Studies program of our *alma mater*, the University of Washington. Gene's contribution to Tibetology needs no introduction, but it may not be as widely known that he was also a pioneer of research on Bhutan. In the late '70s, Gene sponsored the reprinting of many rare works from the private libraries of Bhutan and Sikkim, and even wrote an outline for a Bhutanese history which, with characteristic generosity, he shared with colleagues. I therefore dedicate this small article to commemorate Gene's contributions to Bhutan studies.

Some twenty years ago, the text known as the *rGyal rigs* was first brought to the attention of Himalayan specialists by Michael Aris, based on an edition and pioneering translation of a single manuscript.[1] Since then, more editions and manuscripts have become available, raising new questions about its authorship and date. The purpose of this paper is to review some of these issues in the context of the document's importance for the history of Bhutan and Tibet.

Background

The text known by its abbreviated title the *rGyal rigs* (more fully: *rGyal rigs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me* "The Lamp which Illuminates the Origins of Royal Families") is a history of the former clan lineages and ruling families of eastern Bhutan and Shar Mon or "Eastern Mon," which is an old name for the Tibetanized portion of West Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh (including what is now called the Tawang Corridor).[2] These people have a quite different background from the western Bhutanese, and the *rGyal rigs* is the single best source on their origins. Its underlying theme is the celebration of a class system in which the institutions of kingship and clan nobility are held to be the natural order of mankind. Thus, it traces the ancestry of many leading families of these districts to princes of the Yarlung dynasty of early Tibet, in particular to *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma, elder brother of the celebrated Buddhist king Ral-pa-can, and some even to his notorious younger brother Glang Dar-ma, the alleged destroyer of the dynasty. The author of the *rGyal rigs* was a Bhutanese monk from Tashigang near the border with Shar Mon, who belonged to one of these lineages and wrote under the patronage of their chiefs. He was known only as Ngawang (Ngag-dbang) "monk of the Byar clan," but his full identity remains obscure. We may recall that the most celebrated Shar

1. Aris 1979, pt. V microfiche supplement.
2. We are dealing here with a mixture of ethnographic names and geographic toponyms that have evolved over many centuries. The Mon-pa were an ancient Tibetan, or Tibetanized population group, located in the cis-Himalayan districts from Nepal eastwards, but concentrated mainly in Bhutan and districts to the east. They apparently preceded the coming of that layer of society which traces its ancestry to *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma and about whom the *rGyal rigs* was written. The vaguely defined term "Mon Yul," however, meaning the land occupied by the Mon-pa people, emerged gradually as the name of a specific region divided into Lho Mon, "Southern Mon" (corresponding roughly to what is now western and central Bhutan), and Shar Mon or "Eastern Mon," which before the 17th century may have included parts of what is now eastern Bhutan, although the ancient dividing line is imprecisely known. In this article, we use the term "Shar Mon" to refer specifically to the Mon-pa territories east of present-day Bhutan. In the late 17th century Mon Yul became the name of a specific geographic district of Tibet, bordering on eastern Bhutan. To complicate matters even further, the terms Shar-phyogs, "the East," and Shar-phyogs-pa (pron. "Sharchop"), "the Easterners," are names still used unofficially to describe the areas and people speaking the Tshangla language, in what are now eastern Bhutan, Tibetan Mon Yul and West Kameng in India, emphasizing their common ancestry as described in the *rGyal rigs* (see also George van Driem [1998] *Dzongkha*, Leiden, Research School CNWS: pp. 27 ff.).

Mon-pa in Tibetan history was the 6th Dalai Lama, whose mother belonged to the "royal family" of Ber-mkhar which, according to the *rGyal rigs*, claimed descent from *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma.[3]

In 1986, Michael Aris republished in book form[4] his earlier (and less accessible) 1979 microfiche edition and translation of the *rGyal rigs* on which he based several chapters of his study *Bhutan the Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom.* The two identical versions derived from a single manuscript prepared for Aris in 1971 by a Bhutanese civil servant and scholar from Tashigang named Dasho Tenzin Dorje (*Drag-shos* bsTan-'dzin rDo-rje). In 1984, Tenzin Dorje completed his own edition of the *rGyal rigs*, but it was not published in Bhutan until the following year. Aris (1986) had only just been printed when Dorje's little book came into Michael's hands, revealing some significant gaps in the text that he had just published. He therefore inserted a loose page of *Addenda and Corrigenda* in his book, which included a large piece of missing text along with a comment "The full implications of this new edition for my own work must await detailed study."[5] But Michael Aris never addressed in writing the issues raised by Dorje's book, before his untimely death in 1999. As it turns out, the missing passage is crucial to establishing the date of the *rGyal rigs.*

Besides Aris (1979, 1986), three other versions of the *rGya rigs* are now available. The first of these by Tenzin Dorje,[6] as already noted, was evidently based on the same original MS as the hand copy prepared for Aris, but lacks many of the latter's accidental omissions of text and other copyist's errors. It also utilized additional source documents, and we have therefore treated it as an independent edition. Another version of the *rGyal rigs* was published in Beijing in 1988, based on a manuscript in the State Archives of the TAR.[7] The same publication contains a rather politicized historical analysis of the *rGyal rigs* and the Mon Yul question by the well known author/editor Chab-spel Tshe-brtan Phun-tshogs.[8] Finally, a photocopy of an old *dbu-can* MS of the *rGyal rigs* was obtained from Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh, by the Tibet House Library, New Delhi, of which a duplicate photocopy is located in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. Counting all known published versions and bibliographic items, we thus have six separate documents to work with, based on what we are treating as four original sources, all recently indexed in Dan Martin's *Tibetan Histories.*[9] They are listed here for convenient reference.

Editions and MSS of the *rGyal rigs*

1) Aris (1986) = *Sa skyong rgyal po'i gdung rabs 'byung khungs dang 'bangs kyi mi rabs chad tshul nges par gsal ba'i sgron me.* The Aris MS is in 54 *dbu-can* folios measuring approx. 35 x 8'5 cms. Author: Byar gyi bande Wa-gindra (Aris: "the monk Ngag-dbang (Wa-gindra) of the Byar clan"). Date: *sa pho*

3. Aris 1989: pp. 113 f. It is somewhat challenging to the authority of the *rGyal rigs* that *sDe-srid* gSang-rgyas rGya-mtsho, in his biography of the 6th Dalai Lama, does not mention *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma as this family's royal progenitor. Instead, he cites two different traditions tracing the mother's ancestry to other Tibetan princes: either prince Nya-khri, one of the three sons of the early Tibetan king Gri-gum bTsan-po, or else the fabled Tibetan exile "prince" known by the unfortunate nickname Khyi-kha Ra-thod (on whom see Aris 1979: pp. 60 ff.) (*sDe-srid* Sangs-rgyas rGya-mtsho, *Thams cad mkhyen pa drug pa blo bzang rin chen tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho'i thun mong phyi'i rnam par thar pa du kū la'i 'phro 'thud rab gsal gser gyi snye ma.* Lhasa: Bod-ljongs mi-dmangs dpe skrun-khang, 1989, p. 149). If the "detailed records" of this family's history (referred to by Ngawang as the omitted section [2.1] of the *rGyal rigs*, on which see Tables 1 and 2 and the discussion below) still existed in 1668, and if they truly supported Ngawang's historical argument for the ancestral unity of the Mon-pa people, then the *sDe-srid* ought to have had access to them and reported that fact in preparing his biography of the 6th Dalai Lama, less than forty years later.
4. Aris 1986: *Sources for the History of Bhutan*, pp. 12-85.
5. Aris 1986: addendum to p. 24.
6. Dorje 1984.
7. This edition will be referred to hereafter as Lhasa (1988).
8. Chab-spel Tshe-brtan Phun-tshogs (1988), "*Mon yul ni sngar nas krung go'i mnga' khongs yin pa'i lo rgyus dpang rtags*," contained in Padma bsKal-bzang & Blo-bzang Tshe-brtan (1988), pp. 1-9.
9. In addition to the works cited here, a translation of Dorje (1984) by Khenpo Phuntsok Tashi and Chris Butters was completed (but never published) in 1992 for the National Library of Bhutan (Martin 1997: p. 122). I have not examined this work.

spre'i lo hor zla brgyad pa'i yar tshes bzang po (Aris: = 1728). Presumably, this MS will be deposited among the Aris papers at Oxford University. See Martin (1997), entry no. 265A.

1a) Aris (1979) = Pt. V, microfilm supplement of Aris 1979. Said by Aris to be identical to Aris (1986), but published in microfiche and lacking the added word index. Technically, this is the first edition, however I have not located a copy for examination.

2) Dorje (1984) = *Bod rje mnga' bdag khri ral pa can gyi sku mched lha sras gtsang ma'i gdung brgyud 'phel rabs dang 'bangs kyi mi rabs mched khungs lo rgyus gsal ba'i sgron me.* Small printed book from Bhutan, with no English title page. Author: bsTan-'dzin rDo-rje from Tashigang. Date: 1984. (The copy indexed in Martin [1997] as entry no. 265C had an English title page added for the benefit of the U.S. Library of Congress catalogers, showing that it was published by Lama Rigzin Norbu in Thimphu, 1985.)

3) Lhasa (1988) = *Rje 'bangs rnams kyi rigs rus kyi 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me (Mon chos 'byung) zhes bya ba bzhugs so.* Contained in Padma sKal-bzang & Blo-bzang Tshe-brtan, eds., (1988) *Bod kyi lo rgyus rig gnas dpyad gzhi'i rgyu cha bdams bsgrigs* (No. 1, General Series no. 10). Beijing, Mi-rigs dpe-skrun khang, pp. 87-130. Reputed authors: *Lha-btsun* Ngag-dbang Phun-tshogs and Phyi-tshang Mong-khar-gyi rgyal-po. Date: none stated. The separate colophons of the individual sections preserve the more familiar title *Rgyal rigs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me.* The anonymous editor's preface tells us only that the source MS came from the state archives of the TAR (*Bod rang skyong ljongs yig tshags khang*). See Martin (1997), entry no. 675.

4) TibH[10] = *Gangs can bod du rje rgyal gnya' khri btsan/ srong btsan sgam po khri srong lde'u btsan dang/ lho phyogs mon du lha sras gtsang ma zhes/ rnam par sprul pa'i skye[s] mchog de rnams kyi/ gong ma rje'i gdung rabs 'byung khungs dang/ 'og ma 'bangs kyi mi rabs chad tshul sogs/ ng[e]s par gsal ba'i sgron me bzhugs so//.* Photocopy of an *dbu-can* MS in 50 folios, located in Tibet House, New Delhi. (However, the same illegible or missing folios from LTWA (see 4.a) can be faintly read in this photocopy; they are in a different handwriting). Author (f. 49b): *Byar gyi bandhe* Wa-gindra (= Ngag-dbang). Date (f. 50a): *sa pho spre'i lo hor zla brgyad pa'i yar tshes bzang po.* An unknown Tibetan has added in cursive script above the date, the comment: *rab byung 12/ phyi lo 1728*, i.e. "12th cycle, western year 1728." Added to the bottom of f. 50a of this manuscript and of LTWA are three additional lines, barely legible, the first in *dbu-med*, and the last two in a different cursive hand, containing the following text:[11]

[L-1] *Rigs rus kyi 'byung khungs rnam dag 'di nyid/ sa lug lo'i hor zla xxxxx bris bu shus* [sic: *bshus*] *pa dge'o/ bkra shis/*

[L-2] *Bse ru'i yul ljong[s] lte bar yod par brten nas skyabs mgon sprul sku me long rin po che'i ming brtag pa yin/ bkra shis shog//*

[L-3] *xxxxx.*

(L-1: "This complete copy of the *Rigs rus kyi 'byung khungs* was copied in the xxxx month of the Earth-Sheep year. Virtue! Good luck!"

L-2: "Examined by H.H. Trulku Melong Rinpoche, on the basis [of another MS] located in central bSe-ru district. Good fortune!"[12]

L-3: [illegible])

Date: The Earth-Sheep year of this copy could be 1739, 1799, or 1859. There is no way at present to guess which is correct. This photocopy is not indexed in Martin (1997).

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10. The Director of Tibet House in Delhi, Doboom Tulku, kindly provided me a photocopy of this text in 1996. All references in this article to the MSS labeled TibH and LTWA are based on this copy.

11. Only L-1 is fully legible on my copy. The reading for L-2 is a tentative composite of information kindly supplied to me by Lobsang Shastri of LTWA and Lama Doboom Tulku of Tibet House, based on their interpretations of the copies in their collections. The portions marked by "x" including the entire L-3 are illegible to any of us.

12. bSe-ru, along with Shar-tsho and lHa'u, are the three villages (*tsho*) that make up La-og Yul-gsum district near Tawang monastery (*Bai ḍūrya der po*: 396; Lha-klu Tshe-dbang-rdo-rje 1988: 12). I concur with Doboom Tulku that both L-2 and L-3 were written at a later date, and have nothing to do with the copying of the MS.

4a) LTWA[13] = Duplicate photocopy of 4), located in The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, MS no. Ka 10-5845 (38 ff., pp. 45-47 said to be missing or illegible). Author and date: same as TibH (Martin: = 1728). See Martin (1997), entry no. 265B.

The Structure of the *rGyal rigs*

The *rGyal rigs*, as we now have it, is a somewhat composite work, consisting of a central core and several supplements. Within the core, however, certain sections were expanded in some versions to provide details on family lines that were omitted from others. This is consistent with its character as a 300-year old genealogical history shared by many clans and families, in different political jurisdictions. By comparing these supplements and conflated sections, I believe that we can establish what may have been the original core and the reasons for the differences. This will lead us, finally, to reconsider the question of its authorship and the date and reasons for its composition.

All four source versions of the *rGyal rigs* consist of five numbered chapters, plus one or more colophons, poems and supplements. Table 1 lists all of these, along with a summary of their contents based on the chapter colophons. Sections and subsections lacking numbering in the original have been assigned numbers, shown in brackets. Table 2 is an index of the sections and colophons, showing which ones are included in each source.

Our first observation on the data in Table 2 is the consistency with which all versions preserve the poems [0] and [6], the author's colophon [7], and the core chapters numbered identically 1–5.[14] A close reading of the versions also shows them to be highly faithful to a common text. Based on this fact and the similar style of writing, I believe that we can safely consider these sections to constitute the original *rGyal rigs*, or something very close to it. There are the usual problems of spelling errors and the accidental omission of words and passages. But these are to be expected in a manuscript tradition such as this. The *rGyal rigs* is a purely secular document, and one can imagine the process by which copies must have been borrowed and recopied many times, in order to satisfy the desire of individual families to own one. The problems of Aris (1979/1986) are exactly of this type.

Table 1: *rGyal rigs* – Sections and Colophons

Section	
[0.]	Introductory poem
1.	On the spread of the human race in Tibet, the invitation of a lord-king (*rje-dpon*) and the spread of Buddhism
2.	How the families and clans descended from *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma are given individual names, spread throughout Lho Mon and become lord-chiefs (*rje-dpon*) in those districts
[2.1]	Subsection on the family records of the Lha'u Kham(s)-pa Jo-bo of La-'og Yul-gsum
[2.2]	Subsection on the family records of the Jo-bo of Shar sDe-rang and the Shar Grang-ma river valley
3.	The ancestral origins of the *gDung* (families) of the four districts of Bumthang, central Bhutan
4.	How the six "Vajra brothers" of Lha-lung dPal-gyi-rdo-rje and their descendants became the chiefs of Lho Mon Shar-phyogs called *Zhal-ngo Kheng-po*
5.	The origin of the common people beneath (the ruling families) and their family names
[6.]	Author's concluding poem
[7.]	Author's colophon
[8.]	Dedicatory poem to the Three Jewels
[9.]	Nine addenda on the ruling families of Beng-mkhar, gCen-mkhar, and the Yo-gdung Wang-ma
[10.]	Author's colophon by Tenzin Dorje

13. Information on this document was supplied in an email dated 12/25/00 from Lobsang Shastri of LTWA. It is said to come from Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh. A comparison of hand writing on the last page, and other peculiarities, confirm that it is the same manuscript as TibH.

14. The anonymous editor of Lhasa (1988) indicates (p. 87) that the contents of his original chs. 4 and 5 were mixed up, and that he has corrected this (*le'u bzhi pa dang lnga pa'i gong 'og 'dres 'dzol bskyar bsgrigs*), along with other obvious errors corrected in brackets. All other errors or uncertain readings, he states, were left as in the original.

Table 2: *rGyal-rigs* – Index of Sections and Colophons

Section	*Aris (1979, 1986)*	*Dorje (1984)*	*Lhasa (1988)*	*TibH, LTWA*
[0.]	f. 1b-4b[15]	pp. 2-3	pp. 87-89	ff. 1b-3a
1.	ff. 5a-10a	pp. 3-16	pp. 89-95	ff. 3a-9b
2.	ff. 10a-32a	pp. 16-64	pp. 95-117	ff. 9b-36a
[2.1]	f. 28b "details excluded"	p. 50 "details excluded"	p. 110 "details excluded"	f. 27a "details excluded"
[2.2]	f. 29a "records unavailable"	pp. 51-59	pp. 110-115	ff. 27b-32a
3.	ff. 32a-40a	pp. 64-78	pp. 117-124	ff. 36a-43a
4.	ff. 40a-43b	pp. 78-83	pp. 124-126	ff. 43a-46a
5.	ff. 43b-46b	pp. 83-88	pp. 126-129	ff. 46a-48b
[6.]	ff. 46b-47a	pp. 88-89	pp. 129-130	ff. 48b-49a
[7.]	ff. 47a-48a	pp. 89-90	p. 130 (abbreviated)	ff. 49a-50a
[8.]	ff. 48a-b	pp. 90-91	missing	missing
[9.]	ff. 48b-54a	pp. 91-101	missing	missing
[10.]	NA	p. 101	NA	NA

The structure of chapter 2, I believe, is key to interpreting the remaining differences among the various editions. Chapter 2 is by far the longest section. It consists of a complex series of interlocking genealogies covering the different branch families claiming descent from *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma. These families are said to have descended from two sons of gTsang-ma, and spread widely from districts bordering India in south central Bhutan to Tibetan areas throughout Shar Mon.[16] The Bhutanese branch descended from gCes-bu mThong-legs-btsan, who maintained control of gTsang-ma's ancestral estate at a place called Mi-zim-pa.[17] The eastern branch in Shar Mon descended from the other son, Lha'i dbang-phyug. Each of the six clans and major subfamilies of these two branches is portrayed as having been formed when various local people and their ministers, "lacking a lord-chief" (*rje dpon*), invited a descendant in one of the royal lines to serve their community in that capacity by building a castle (*mkhar*) and producing a line of male descendants by a local wife. More than twenty individual branch families are so described, in addition to others that terminated for various reasons.[18]

Section [2.1] constituted a detailed story of the original family branch in Shar Mon called the Jo-bo clan of La-'og Yul-gsum. It was specifically excluded, the author states, because it could already be found in other published records (*deb ther yig cha la gsal bas 'dir ma bkod*).[19] Thus, only a summary of these events is provided in the *rGyal rigs*.

The treatment of section [2.2] on the Jo-bo ruling family of sDe-rang ('Di-rang)[20] is a different matter. The manuscript edited by Aris states that (f. 28b) "as for the details, I have neither seen the records nor heard the oral accounts, and so have not written them here" (*zhib par ni yig cha dang gtam rgyud mthong thos med pa las 'dir ma bkod*). Our other three sources do not have this phrase. Instead, they reproduce a common text

15. Aris 1986: p. 14 indicates that the page numbering in his text is "muddled."

16. A third lineage is briefly mentioned for western Bhutan, but the *rGyal rigs* scarcely deals with it. See Aris 1979: pp. 88 f.

17. Mi-zim-pa (or Pho-brang Mi-zim-mkhar, as the name is given by *sDe-srid* Sangs-rgyas rGya-mtsho, *op. cit.*: 49) was the ancestral estate and site of a castle in eastern Bhutan ascribed to the exiled Tibetan prince lHa-sras gTsang-ma, son of Sad-na-legs. It is identified nowadays with ruins at Jamkhar near Tashigang.

18. See the detailed genealogy in Aris 1979: facing p. 98.

19. To my knowledge, no such written source predating the *rGyal rigs* has yet emerged from libraries in Tibet, Kameng or eastern Bhutan.

20. Dirang Dzong in West Kameng, Arunachal Pradesh, is located about 12 km west of Bomdila, and an equal distance east of the Bhutan border.

containing extensive genealogical information on both the pre-existing families of Dirang and the coming of prince gTsang-ma's descendant to serve as their *rje-dpon.* Between these three sources there are numerous differences in punctuation and the spelling of names. In general TibH seems to contain the best readings and Dorje (1984) the worst. The manuscript of Lhasa (1988) seems generally to lie between these two, and was probably also obtained from somewhere in Shar Mon.

An issue related to the conflation of internal segments is that of the supplements [9] found only in Aris (1979, 1986) and Dorje (1984). These supplements appear to relate to the activities of now forgotten local rulers from districts of southeastern Bhutan, on both sides of the modern border with India (the region of the so-called "Duars" or passes between the plains and the mountains of Bhutan). They are of a very local flavor, as already noted by Aris,[21] and the language is much more rustic than the earlier core of the *rGyal rigs*. It is not known when or by whom these supplements were added to the *rGyal rigs.* It is possible that Tenzin Dorje himself may have discovered this information and added it to the text that he provided to Aris, and later published in his own work.

One possible conclusion from the above analysis is that there have existed two "recensions" of the *rGyal rigs*, based on regional variation. Each recension, eastern and western, would have emphasized lineages found in its area. What I have called "the original *rGyal rigs*" may be very close to the text of the "western recension," containing only the sketch of subsection [2.1] and the author's statement that the records of subsection [2.2] were unavailable. Both subsections deal with the branch families in Shar Mon. The "eastern recension" must have included the expanded version of subsection [2.2]. As more original manuscripts of the *rGyal rigs* become available, especially from Mon Yul, we may understand the variation of these texts with more certainty.

The most likely timing for a split in the manuscript traditions would have been the late 17th century, following the carving up of Mon Yul and establishment of lines of control in these districts between an easterly expanding Bhutan and a defensive Tibet.[22] These lines of control eventually solidified as international boundaries, with an officially Drukpa Bhutan to the west and politically Gelugpa communities to the east. Cross-border interchange among the family branches must have become more difficult after this, and the already tenuous ties of ancient kinship even more distant. Dorje (1984), it could be argued, would seem to be an exception to this hypothesis, in that it is a Bhutanese text reproducing section [2.2], which belongs to what I have called the "eastern recension." But this author, I suggest, has attempted to bridge the disciplines of traditional and modern scholarship, and for the sake of completeness he has located a source containing the missing bits of genealogy.[23] The fact that its orthography and grammar seem slightly less authentic than TibH in the section on Dirang may reflect a general Bhutanese unfamiliarity with the names and dialect of that district.

The Authorship and Dating of the *rGyal rigs*

We now have sufficient background to examine the question of authorship and date of composition. From the very beginning, Michael Aris never varied in asserting that the Earth-Male-Monkey year, given as the

21. Aris 1986: p. 84, fn. 121.

22. On this see Michael Aris "Notes on the history of the Mon-yul Corridor," in *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Oxford: 1979, pp. 11-12.

23. Dorje is also careful to cite his sources. These are listed in section [10] as: 1) *Sa skyong rgyal po'i gdung rabs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me*; 2) *Khengs 'brog dkar mkho che nas rgyal rigs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me*; and 3) *Dung bsam bde chen gling mkho che nas rgyal rigs 'byung khungs* ("missing pages at the beginning and end"). The first is nothing more than the *rGyal rigs* of Ngawang. The next two are otherwise unknown works on the so-called *mKho-che* noble families of Khengs 'Brog-dkar (pron. Bjoka) in Zhemgang/Mongar districts and of Dungsam Dechenling in Pemagatshel district of eastern Bhutan. Tenzin Dorje has also written still other unpublished works on the history of eastern Bhutan. In 1996 I was briefly shown an original 144-page MS authored by him in 1988, entitled *Rje dpon khrungs rabs blo gsar byis pa dga'' ba'i rna rgyan* ("The Genealogies of Lord-Chiefs, being an Ear Ornament Pleasing to those of Youthful Mind"). It seems to be based on yet another unreported history of the

date of the *rGyal rigs* by its author Ngawang, was to be taken as 1728. This date is found in what we have called section [7], the author's colophon. However, the *rab-byung* or cycle number of the Tibetan calendar is not given, so that the same date could correspond to other Earth-Male-Monkey years. In fact, there is strong internal evidence that the date of its composition was not 1728, but rather one *rab-byung* earlier, namely 1668.[24]

Before reviewing this evidence, it is worth recalling once again the composite character of this book, and note that each version has a slightly different title. In fact, this is yet another example of the familiar Tibetan practice of "authoring" a book by taking an existing work, adding or modifying a few sections and reissuing it under a slightly different title, but one close enough to the original such that educated readers would recognize it to be based upon the earlier work.[25] Dorje (1984) is a book of this same type. The author's own original contribution consists of a few additions here and there to the genealogies, the incorporation of section [2.2] material and perhaps the nine supplements also reproduced in Aris (1979, 1986). For the rest, the book reproduces exactly the same *rGyal rigs* as our other three sources, but without any clear indication of where Ngawang's work leaves off and his own contribution begins.

This raises the possibility that what we have called "the original *rGyal rigs*" could be the work of someone still earlier than the monk Ngawang. The question becomes most relevant in evaluating the manuscript that we have called Lhasa (1988). As published in Beijing, this manuscript not only bears a highly divergent title,[26] but its very brief and undated author's colophon [7] attributes the book to two individuals who are only listed among the sponsors of Ngawang's work. It also lacks colophon [8]. Should we therefore take Lhasa (1988) as a precursor to the *rGyal rigs* as written by Ngawang, perhaps one generation earlier?

The probable answer, I think, is no, at least not until the condition of the manuscript reproduced as Lhasa (1988) is more carefully described, or other editions of the *rGyal rigs* become available. But it is worth looking at the evidence. Section 2 is structured identically in all four versions, including a passage citing the historical sources on which it is based.[27] One of these sources was an astrological textbook called the *bsTan rtsis gdan dus thun mong* composed by a Ladakhi teacher of the Shabdrung Rinpoche named Lha-dbang Blo-gros (1550-1633/4). We know from a Bhutanese history of the 18th century that this teacher was working on astrological texts at Cheri monastery in Bhutan, shortly after the Shabdrung's arrival in 1616,

eastern Bhutanese nobility entitled *'Brug shar phyogs su rje dpon 'byung rabs blo gsar byis pa dga' ba'i rna rgyan* (cited on p. 90 of the MS). Lastly, from a recent work on the history of Zhemgang district of Bhutan, we are told of one more unpublished history of eastern Bhutan by Dorje entitled *'Brug gi rgyal rab[s] 'byung khungs* (see Tenzin Rigden & Ugyen Pelgen (1999) *Khengrig Namsum - A historical profile of Zhemgang Dzongkhag*, Zhemgang: Integrated Sustainable Development Programme, p. 32 fn). The relationship of all these works to each other and to the *rGyal rigs* of Ngawang is unknown.

24. Aris 1978: pp. 22, 37; Aris 1979: p. 94, etc. The only supporting evidence for 1728 is a marginal notation by an unknown, modern Tibetan commentator on the date *sa pho spre lo* in the colophon of TibH, f. 50a: *rab byung 12/ phyi lo 1728*, i.e. "12th cycle, western year 1728." It is unknown when this annotation was made, possibly after the publication of Michael's earliest discussion on the subject in 1978 (Aris 1978: p. 37).

25. A typical example of this practice is the massive *History of the Chiefs of sTag-lung* (*Dpal stag lung ga zi'i gdung rabs... ngo mtshar nor bu'i do shal...*), written by the 28th sTag-lung hierarch Ngag-dbang-bstan-pa'i-nyi-ma (b. 1788) and cited often in professor Petech's studies. The first 20 chapters of this work turn out to be exactly identical to the history called *Chos 'byung ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* composed c. 1609 by sTag-lung *rje-btsun* Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal (1571-1625/6). The ornamental titles sharing the word *ngo-mtshar* are supposed to alert the reader that the two works are interrelated.

26. The editors have added angle brackets to the title without explanation of what is actually found on the original title page, or even if there was one. The subordinate title *Mon chos 'byung* is also not found elsewhere. However, the more common title *rGyal rigs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me* is found in each chapter colophon.

27. These sources are said to include the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, the *dPag bsam ljon pa* and "other authoritative sources" (*rgyal rabs khungs ldan pa*) (Lhasa 1988: p. 95; Dorje 1984: pp. 16-17). Unfortunately, this passage became corrupted in Aris (1986) to *rgyal rabs khugs pa*, which led him into a futile search for a text of that name.

and the author himself claims to have written the *bsTan rtsis* in that very year.[28] So the original *rGyal rigs* must have been written after that date. This disproves the unsupported assertion by Chab-spel Tshe-brtan Phun-tshogs that the Earth-Monkey year of its composition was 1608.[29]

The key information on the date of composition comes from the passage, near the beginning of Section 2, which was accidentally omitted from the manuscript translated by Michael Aris. It reads as follows:

> "According to the *bsTan rtsis gdan dus thun mong* of the scholar *mKhas-grub* Lha-dbang Blo-gros, 'In the Fire-Male-Dragon year *Khri* Ral [pa can] died, and Glang Dar-ma became king.'[30] Also, *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma came to Lho Mon [i.e. Bhutan] at that time. This is certain. Five years later, king Glang Dar-ma was killed by Lha-lung dPal-gyi-rdo-rje. Ten years later, his sons 'Od-srungs and Yum-brtan fought amongst themselves. Then, from the above-mentioned Fire-Male-Dragon year until today's Earth-Male-Monkey year, a time of warfare with dBus and gTsang, 833 years have passed."[31]

Now, while there is no complete agreement as to the dates of *Khri* Ral-pa-can, a well established Tibetan tradition holds that he died in the Fire-Dragon year 836 (though others place it five years later, in the Iron-Bird year 841). Adding 833 years (after the Tibetan manner of taking the starting date as the first year) yields the Earth-Male-Monkey year 1668 as the date when the *rGyal rigs* was written. This exactly matches the date given in colophon [7] of all those versions that claim to have been written by Ngawang.

This colophon now requires a closer look. I reproduce here the version from Dorje (1984), with a few minor corrections. The initial portion in upright type represents the entire equivalent colophon from Lhasa (1988):

> (Dorje [1984]: p. 89) *Kha-gling gi rgyal rigs bslab gsum sde snod [pa] 'dzin pa mkhyen pa la mi rmongs pa'i Lha-btsun Ngag-dbang Phun-tshogs dang/ Phyi-tshang Mong-gar gyi rgyal rigs dpa' mdzangs brtul phod che zhing khungs btsun pa'i rgyal po[s brtsams/] dBang grags dang/ Phyi-tshang sKya-sa-mkhar gyi rgyal rigs shes bya blo gros rgyas shing smra ba stong [s]de'i ru dar la mkhas pa'i rGyal po dang/ Phong-mi'i Yas-sde'i rgyal rigs 'phrul thabs sgyu rtsal la mkhas pa'i chos-mdzad Klu-dkar dang/ Shar-phyogs sDe-rang gi rgyal po mi chos yon tan drug dang thabs bzhi'i mnga' brnyes* (p. 90) *'phrul thabs kyi 'khor lo sgyur ba'i Jo-bo A-bzang dang/ de dag rnams kyis so so nas lhag bsam rnam par dkar ba'i gsung gis bskul ba las/ shes rig sbyangs brtson gyi yon tan dang mthong thos nyams myong rig rtsal gyi spobs pa gang yang med kyang/ gsung rigs gyen zlog ma nus par Byar gyi bande Wa-gindra'i ming gis sngon byung gi rgyal rabs dang/ phyis*

28. *Lho'i chos 'byung*: f. 29b. A wood block print of the *bsTan rtsis gdan dus thun mong* in 61 folios carved by Lha-dbang Blo-gros himself (f. 1a), along with several commentaries, has been reprinted in recent years by the Bhutan National Library. On f. 4a of this work, we read: ... *de yi lo ngo nyer gsum pa// da lta'i gnam lo me 'brug shar// sangs rgyas mya ngan 'das pa nas// da lta'i mi lo yan chad du// nyi* [sic] *stong drug brgya don gsum 'das//.* "This is his [the Shabdrung Rinpoche's] 23rd year, which is today's Fire Dragon year. In terms of human years, it is 2,663 years after the Buddha's enlightenment (and death)." Since Shabdrung Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal was born in 1594, this Fire Dragon year must correspond to 1616.

29. Chab-spel Tshe-brtan Phun-tshogs 1988: p. 8. More specifically, he writes (my translation): "... from the 9th century, when *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma came to Mon Yul at about age 40, until the Earth-Monkey year of the 10th Tibetan era 1608 when this history was written, more than 700 years have passed during which some 23 generations of *Lha-sras* gTsang-ma's descendants have ruled over the districts of Mon." It is hard to believe that Chab-spel was carefully reading Lhasa (1988) when he wrote this.

30. The passage is found on f. 5b of the *gTan rtsis*: *me 'brug khri ral gshegs pa dang/ dar mas rgyal po byas pa tshun//.*

31. Aris 1986, *Addenda and Corrigenda* to p. 24; Dorje 1984: p. 18; TibH 10b-11a: *lo'i nges pa ni mkhas grub lha dbang blo gros kyi bstan rtsis gdan dus thun mong las/ me pho 'brug la khri ral gshegs pa dang/ glang dar mas rgyal po mdzad pas tshun gsung pa dang/ lha sras gtsang ma yang de'i dus la lho mon la phebs pa nges pa yin pas/ de nas lo lnga la rgyal po glang dar ma lha lung dpal gyi rdo rjes bkrongs pa yin/ de nas lo bcu la sras 'od srungs dang yum brtan gnyis 'khrugs pa yin/ /gong gi me pho 'brug lo nas da lta'i dbus gtsang 'khrugs pa'i sa pho spre'u lo yan chad la lo grangs brgya phrag brgyad dang sum cu so gsum song/.* Part of this passage is corrupted in Lhasa (1988): p. 95.

> *byung gi yig cha 'thor bu rnams so so nas bsdus shing/ rgan rabs kyi gtam rgyun gyi khungs legs par dpyad cing gcig tu bsdus pa 'di ni phur bu zhes pa sa pho spre lo'i hor zla brgyad pa'i yar tshes bzang po la/ gza' dang skar ma'i sbyor ba phun sum tshogs shing lang tsho dpal gyi nyi mas gang ba'i nyin/ rgya bod kyi 'dun sa bkra shis sgang gi pho brang gzhal yas khang gi zur khang du zin bris su bkod pa las/ thog mar yi ge'i lam du spel ba po sNga-tshang bKra-shis-sding-mkhar gyi rJe rigs chos-mdzad Nor-bu Dar-rgyas kyis bris pa dge legs phyogs dus gnas skabs thams cad du dar zhing rgyas la yun ring du gnas par gyur cig//.*

Thus, Ngawang lists five royal figures of the eastern clans as the chief inspirers of his work, men whom he personally knew from areas in both Bhutan and the Tibetan Mon Yul areas of West Kameng. Since this has already been translated by Aris[32] we need only look at the wavy underlined portion representing the colophon of Lhasa (1988):

> "Written by *Lha-btsun* Ngag-dbang Phun-tshogs of the royal family of Kha-gling, upholder of the teachings and unimpaired as to knowledge, and by the king of the royal family of Phyi-tshang Mong-gar, who is heroic, brave and of ancient nobility."

The question is whether this short colophon is the original one belonging to a precursor of Ngawang's work, or rather, as I think more likely, an artificially truncated version of the longer colophon (in the process deleting the Mong-gar king's name dBang-grags), to which someone has added the final verb *brtsams*, i.e. "written" and an instrumental *–s* to the name of its agent. Such a truncation could have easily occurred following the loss of the final page in the manuscript. Unfortunately, the editors of Lhasa (1988) provide insufficient information on the condition of their manuscript. The fact that they apparently had to reconstruct the book title makes us suspect that that page, also, may have been missing. Moreover, no authors of such a work would have honored themselves with such praiseful epithets. However, to my mind, the best evidence that it was Ngawang who wrote "the original *rGyal rigs*" is the manner in which the date *sa pho spre'i lo* has been worked convincingly into both colophon [7] of the fuller version and chapter two of the main work.

The Position of the *rGyal rigs* in Bhutanese and Tibetan History

Although we have little more information on the chiefs who sponsored the *rGyal rigs*, we certainly know their reasons for doing so. Michael Aris touched on this question elsewhere, but his explanation has far more relevance in the context of 1668 than of 1728.[33]

The local kings and noble chiefs of eastern Bhutan had been forced a mere decade earlier into submission to the rule of the Shabdrung Rinpoche, founder of the modern state.[34] He formed the nucleus of his government in western Bhutan in 1625/26, as a Drukpa sectarian establishment espousing the Tibetan Buddhist concept of governance called *chos srid zung 'brel*, "the unity of religion and the civil state."[35] This theory paid no heed to the secular principles of sacral kingship and clan nobility revered by the *rGyal rigs* and its sponsors. In 1667, as the dust of their lost battle with the west was still settling, their conqueror in that campaign was himself enthroned as the civil head of state in Bhutan. The 3rd *sDe-srid,* Mi-'gyur brTan-pa (r. 1667-1680), pushed the borders of the emerging state to the limits of what is now eastern Bhutan,

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32. Aris 1986: p. 67.
33. Aris 1979: pp. 94 f. "By 1728 sufficient time had elapsed since the takeover of east Bhutan for the ancient ruling clans to realize that they had lost the traditional bases of their authority." "Thus the *rGyal rigs* was occasioned by sentiments of preservation in the face of a collapsing clan organization." But surely, these realizations and sentiments would have been most keenly felt during the early years after the defeated chieftains' submission, when the loss was still fresh in their minds. By 1728, all of the original players in these events would have been dead.
34. These struggles were the subject of a second work by monk Ngawang, the so-called *Lo rgyus gsal ba'i me long* also edited and translated in Aris 1986: pp. 88-120.
35. See Ardussi (forthcoming), "Formation of the State of Bhutan *('Brug gzhung)* in the 17th century and its Tibetan antecedents," contained in Christoph Cüppers, ed., *Papers from the Lumbini conference on the relationship between religion and state in traditional Tibet*, March 4-9, 2000).

driving out the Gelugpa lama of Merak and his followers who turned for protection to Lhasa.[36] This resulted in a series of Tibetan invasions during the years 1675-1678, actively supported by Mon-pa followers of the Gelugpa and by several of the uprooted chieftains of central and eastern Bhutan. But Bhutan successfully defended its territories, and an uneasy treaty with Tibet was negotiated in 1679, after which the Lhasa government formally annexed what was left of Mon Yul and regularized its administration. To guard this new frontier the 5th Dalai Lama founded Tawang monastery near mTsho-sna, in 1681, and installed the displaced Merak lama Blo-gros rGya-mtsho as abbot and principal administrator of Mon Yul.[37]

It is therefore not surprising that, in the midst of this turmoil, poem [0] which opens the *rGyal rigs* laments the defeat and degraded state of the ancient, proud eastern peoples, which the author attributes to "a loss of the distinctions between high born and low, a mixing up of the clans, and people's general apathy when lectured about their ancient ancestry." The average Easterner, it seems, no longer cared about the legends of his royal ancestors with the same passion as expressed by Ngawang and the ruling elite. In such sad circumstances, Ngawang hoped, "a future king might yet arise from among the high born clans" "appointed by the heavens to rule powerfully on earth, like a star shining in the daytime." But "this [book] is a secret little song," he concluded, "a story I tell carefully only to men of nobility, on whose faces it might raise a smile, not one that I dare to repeat for the ears of all."[38]

Indeed, the *rGyal rigs* would not have been favorably received by Mi-'gyur brTan-pa and his Drukpa generals. It was definitely a work of protest, as Aris once suggested,[39] even if the blame for their defeat was mostly attributable to the Easterners' own disunity and failure to sustain the clan institutions of their forebears. Aware of this, Ngawang wrote the *rGyal rigs* to simultaneously document and pay tribute to their royal tradition and to a way of life already in decline and destined to irrelevance. What was rising in their place were rival governments in Punakha and Lhasa, driven by competing sectarian visions that would forever divide the eastern people, descendants of gTsang-ma, into citizens of Bhutan and those of Mon Yul.

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36. *Du kū la'i gos bzang*: vol. 1: ff. 238b, 243a; vol. 2: ff. 36b-38b. The timing of the last visit was only months before the Tibetan invasions of Bhutan were launched.

37. Mon Yul was officially incorporated as a political district by the Tibetan government in 1681, merging the smaller districts of Shar Nyi-ma tsho gsum, Dwags-pa, Legs-po, Sha-'ug, La-'og, and sPang-chen. It was divided into 32 settlement blocks called *tsho* and *lding*. Mon Yul came to be governed by a committee of four officials (two of them directly appointed by the Tibetan government) called the *Mon-khul rta-dbang bzhi-sbrel,* headquartered at Tawang monastery (see Chab-spel Tshe-brtan Phun-tshogs, "*Mon yul ni sngar nas krung go'i mnga' khongs yin pa'i lo rgyus dpang rtags*": 8-9, and Lha-klu Tshe-dbang rGyal-po, "*Di lir gsang ba'i yig rigs brje len byas pa der bod sa gnas srid gzhung gis khas len byas rigs med pa*": 10-12, both articles published in Padma bsKal-bzang & Blo-bzang Tshe-brtan 1988). See also M. Aris "Notes on the history of the Mon-yul Corridor," in Michael Aris & Aung San Suu Kyi, eds. (1980), *Tibetan Studies – In Honour of Hugh Richardson.* Proceedings of the International Seminar on Tibetan Studies, Oxford, 1979, Warminster: Aris & Phillips, p. 11-12; Aris 1989: pp. 117 ff.

38. Dorje 1984: p. 3; Aris 1986: pp. 12-14: *lo rgyus bstan bcos kun la mthong thos dang// 'jig rten rgan rabs mkhas pa'i ngag rgyun bzhin// kun gyis go bde nyer mkho cung zad tsam// brjod par spro yang snyigs dus skye bo rnams// mi srun gzu lum spyod pa'i shugs 'gros kyis// ya rabs che btsun rje 'bangs mtho dman med// rigs rus 'chol bar song ba'i dus nyid la// brgyud khung bshad kyang don med ngal ba'i rgyu// 'on kyang ma 'ongs dus kyi skabs 'ga' re// rigs rus mngon mtho dpa' mdzangs blo gros ldan// gnam bskos stobs kyis sa la dbang sgyur ba'i// rje rgyal brgyud pa nyin skar byung srid na// dgyes pa'i 'dzum zhal snyan gyi dga' ston dang// ya rabs pho mnyam khrol mor gleng ba'i gtam// kun gyi rna ba'i thos rgyar mi spobs kyang// mgrin dbyangs gsang ba'i glu chung 'di ltar len//.*

39. Aris 1979: pp. 94 f.

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REGISTERS AND ACCOUNT BOOKS OF THE DGA'-LDAN PHO-BRANG GOVERNMENT*

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Although some information[1] is already available on the administration and political affairs of the Tibetan Central Government established under the 5th Dalai Lama (and called the dGa'-ldan pho-brang government), we still lack detailed knowledge on several aspects of over its 300 years (1642-1950) of existence. I am referring here to the daily routines of both high and low officials and, for example, to the internal administration of districts (*rdzong*) or estates (*gzhis*).

The regent (*sde-srid*) Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho listed in his "Guidelines for Officials"[2] the selection criteria for and a general job description of particular positions. In his rules and regulations he occasionally refers to official documents, registers, account books, receipts and other similar written material, which must have existed in quite a huge quantity, but not many have surfaced and are available for research.

The collection of official government proclamations[3] kept in the Bavarian State Library in Munich also refers very often to such material, and it can be assumed that this latter played an important role within the bureaucratic system, particularly when the officeholder was remote from the central government, as in the case of district commissioners (*rdzong-sdod, rdzong-dpon*), storehouse-keepers (*bkar-'jug-pa*) and tax-collectors (*yong-sdud-pa*).

Since we do not have the documents themselves but only references to them, I would like to introduce some of them here, as far as their contents, purpose and function can be deduced from these references. It goes without saying that my statements are very tentative and will surely need in many instances to be corrected once actual documents become available.

Higher officials were selected for their posts from the list of candidates called *'os-tho*, which may be rendered literally as "the list of qualified ones." Such lists seem to have been very similar to the *mtshan-tho* or name lists of lay officials published by L. Petech in 1973, the so-called wood-mouse year roll (*shing-byi*) corresponding to the Western date of 1924.[4]

In addition to the information given in this list, namely the family and personal names, the age of the official and the date of his entrance into government service, the 5th Dalai Lama added one more category in his *'os-tho* for the post of *sde-srid*, and that is the qualification or knowledge of the official. The Tibetan

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* It was a great honour for me to be asked to contribute to this Festschrift for E. Gene Smith. Gene constantly provided help and his exceptional hospitality in his house in Delhi during his term there as a Field Director of the Library of Congress still arouses fond memories. His house in Delhi, with its huge library was always an attraction for me, and it was there that I firstly met many Tibetan and non-Tibetan colleagues and friends. Gene's Bodhisattva-like generosity, for example in providing us free access to his library and sharing with us his deep knowledge of Tibetan literature, influenced me very much to keep on with my Tibetan studies. Unforgettable are the days when Ramon Prats, Leonard van der Kuijp and I went together with loads of Tibetan books from Gene's library to the nearby bazaar to photocopy them. It is to Gene that I dedicate this article, for which disproportionate shortness in relation to Gene's unfailing kindness I have to apologize.

1. Much information can be gathered from the relevant work of Luciano Petech, Melvyn Goldstein, Dieter Schuh, Zahiruddin Ahmad, Yumiko Ishihama, and Rebecca French, just to mention only a few.
2. "*Blang dor gsal ba ston pa'i drang thig dvangs shel gyi me long nyer gcig pa*," in *Bod kyi snga rabs khrims srol yig cha bdams bsgrigs*, Lhasa: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-skrun khang (Gangs can rig mdzod, 7), 1989, pp. 198-274.
3. *rDzong gzhis/ sprod dpang/ bkar yong sogs kyi[s] mtshon pa'i rtsis su gtong 'jog skor gyi rtsa tshig/*, Munich: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. tibet. 24.
4. See Luciano Petech, *Aristocracy and Government in Tibet, 1728-1959*, Rome: IsMEO (Serie Orientale Roma, XLV), 1973, pp. 240-249.

term that he used here is *shes-yong* (in full: *shes-bya yong-thang*). In later writings and editions of administrative material the term is often replaced by the term *shes-yon* (in full: *shes-bya dang yon-tan*), which has a similar meaning. If a post was vacant, suitable candidates were selected from a short-list, the *'os-tho bsdu-ba*.

If candidates were, for example, selected for the post of district commissioner and were sent to a district, they started by formally taking over responsibility for all parts of the district from the former incumbent. This was done by carefully checking all inventory books (*gzhung-khra*) and comparing the entries with the actual items. Included in these inventory books were all belongings of the district, such as the buildings, fields, grazing grounds, wetlands and parks, grasslands, rivers and trees of mountains and valleys (*ri-klung*), and, of course, the borders of the district. It was expected that both district commissioners, the former and the new one, would go on an inspection tour (*rdog-skor*) through the whole district for this purpose.

The next book they had to check was the census (*them-deb*) of the serfs (*mi-ser*). This book had to be updated, and any decrease or increase in the number of persons had to be carefully marked. Related to the census was the revenue register, the *yong-deb*, kept by the tax-collectors. These officials entered into the revenue register the particular amount and weight of collected products submitted as tax payments. This registered amount they had to hand over to the storehouse-keepers, who then reweighed the goods. An exception was made only in cases of tax payments in hay, wood, turf or burning material, which could be stored as delivered. The reason probably was that such material lost some weight when becoming dry.

The animals belonging to the *rdzong*, namely horses, mules, cattle, sheep and goats, were registered in the cattle register (*phyugs-deb*). Here the complete numbers of the different species had to be mentioned according to the following four categories:

1) What the cattle were used for during the period of the former incumbent
2) Which animals were sent to the storehouse-keeper
3) Which were sent outside (*phyir-song*) to another district
4) Which ones had died and the quantity of their milk products.

With regard to the deceased cattle, the *phyugs-deb* contained also the amount of meat and skin they yielded. If the district commissioners had to prepare new lists or registers, both they and their clerks had to take care not to mix up the different groups (*sde-mtshan*) and items.

The whole process of transferring responsibility for the administration of a district was concluded by preparation of the conveyance document, the *sprod-deb*, in which any changes with regard to the former period had to be marked with red ink (*dmar-mchan*). The new incumbent had also to report to the central government any neglect of duty on the part of the former district commissioner or his staff.

One may regard the different districts as economic units that were expected to produce the various goods needed by the central government in Lhasa. The *gtong-deb* ("register of things to be sent") contained a long list of products to be produced in a district and collected by the tax-collectors and storehouse-keepers for despatching to Lhasa. The list starts with animal products (skins and furs, wool, various kinds of meat and milk products), and continues with minerals and seeds for preparing medicines, different qualities of incense, arrows, writing material (including paper and ink), stone based paints and other odds and ends needed by the central government.

In administering a district and *rdzong*, the district commissioner had to keep two account books, one for income (*byung-khra*) and one for expenditures (*song-khra*). The income register listed all income, for example, from legal cases (*khrims-byung*) and the income obtained other than from tax-collection, the so-called *shugs-byung*. The *khrims-byung gi byung-khra* should be distinguished from the *khrims-'degs re'u-mig*. The latter is a scale of fines for various crimes and disputed acts, already known to us through the work of O. Meisezahl and R. French. In many cases the *re'u-mig* are found as appendices in law (*zhal-lce*) texts. The *khrims-byung gi byung-khra,* on the other hand, lists all real income from law cases settled by the district commissioner. He himself had to prepare these lists under the following five columns:

1) The person who committed the crime
2) The crime
3) The punishment
4) The items confiscated
5) The market price of the confiscated items

The *shugs-byung gi byung-khra* had to be prepared similarly, with the persons, dates and items involved. It should be said that the Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in his "Guidelines for Officials" decreed that the officials should always collect quality articles and not just any old items (such as old furniture) as fines or taxes.

The *song-khra* listed all expenditures of a district. The official government proclamations (*rtsa-tshig*) mention the different occasions calling for the district commissioner to enter the various expenses into his account. Besides the salaries for his regular staff and the expenses for feeding horses and mules when not kept on the grazing grounds, and the expenses for feeding (only strong and loud-barking (*skad-bzang*) watchdogs, there existed some other categories which were allowed to be entered into the accounts. An example is that of "guest entertainment," when foreign delegations arrived in the district for official purposes. For example, in the case of a delegation with low-ranking messengers the district commissioner was allowed to enter the expenses for their food for a maximum of five days into his account.

It should be kept in mind that foreign delegations could carry a *lam-yig* (passport) for entering the district, but rarely had a *chas-yig* when coming from abroad. The *chas-yig* usually contained the ration of food travellers or officials on the road could claim from storehouses. It was regarded as self-evident that the amount of food given to such delegations should be in proper proportion to the members in the delegation.

Tax-collectors when coming to the *rdzong* in order to settle their accounts received as a salary the same amount of food and tea as the district commissioner. When on a tour to collect taxes in the district they were entitled to receive some extra provisions called *thug-rdor*.

One interesting entry into the account was the expenses for propaganda purposes. The district commissioner was expected to spend something for such activities in order to attract people from the border regions to "favour our own side" (*rang-phyogs-su blo-'gugs*). We can only guess the exact nature of these activities.

Another list to be prepared and kept by the district commissioner was the shopping list (*nyos-tho*). Whatever was needed by the *rdzong* but was not available there could be bought from outside, and the market price entered into the account. But before something was bought, the storehouse-keepers were expected to make sure that the goods were not available in some corner of the stores.

The district commissioner could also enter into his account any expenses incurred for physicians (*'tsho-byed / em-chi*) when helping an official who was staying far away from home. These expenses included all medicine and the provisions for the doctor.

A category which was not allowed to be entered into the accounts was the amount spent to entertain private traders (*sger-khag gi tshong-pa*). The short explanation was that there was no direct profit (*tshur-byung*) involved for the government from this.

In this context I like to mention the *bca'-yig* of a *rdzong*. In contrast to the existence of *bca'-yig*s in the context of monasteries, I have never come across a *bca'-yig* relating to a *rdzong* or estate, but they are clearly mentioned in the collection of proclamations kept in the Bavarian State Library in Munich.[5] All information can be extracted from it shows that this kind of *bca'-yig* must have regulated the daily routine in a *rdzong*. It fixed the opening times of the main gate (*rgyal-sgo*), where presumably records were kept for the registration of persons who entered or left the *rdzong*. One paragraph is devoted to the proper behaviour of guards (*gzim-chung-pa*). Anything contrary to proper behaviour was not tolerated (the Tibetan expression is *mdzes-lam la gnod-pa mi chog*). It was regarded as lack of good manners if someone was repairing shoes or spinning wool in public, sitting or standing at ease in front of high officials. It was also forbidden to write

5. See for example the phrase "*rdzong gzhis bca' yig byings dang mtshungs*" in the Collection of Decrees (*rDzong gzhis/ sprod dpang/ bkar yong sogs kyi[s] mtshon pa'i rtsis su gtong 'jog skor gyi rtsa tshig/*).

graffiti with charcoal on the walls of government buildings. Similarly, smoking inside government buildings was forbidden due to the fire hazard.

As an example of a receipt, I here provide the text and translation of a relatively recent document that is kept in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, under the acquisition or catalogue no. LTWA Document No. 346.[6] It was issued when the government of Nepal sent a pair of elephants to Tibet as a gift to the 14th Dalai Lama. In Heinrich Harrer's book *Lost Lhasa* is a photograph of one of these elephants.[7] This document is a good example of how the storehouse-keepers managed to include expenses of the category "guest entertainment" in their accounts.

Description of the document

The document consists of four lines on brown paper and has a black round seal of 1.6 cm in diameter. The letter in the seal looks like the Tibetan letter DZA. The year of issue is *me-phag* (1947).

Tibetan text of the document:[8]

[1] gcen lung gnyer-khang nas / (7) gong-sa skyabs-mgon chen-por gor-rgyal nas spyan-gzigs glang-chen 'bul bzhes kyi gdan zhu

[2] sku-tshab dang / glang-brdzi bcas gad-pa ser gling du 'byor gdong zur chas thog rtsam ru'i khal bdun dang / sha lug-khog phyed gsum / gra chag

[3 ru'i khal gsum / mar mkhar khal gnyis dang nyag bcu-bzhi / bya 'bras grangs lnga-bcu tham-pa / glang-chen la bzhes-gsol krad-skor grangs nyi

[4] shu-rtsa-lnga bcas song 'dug-par rtsis 'gro'i 'dzin / me-phag zla 2 tshes la Seal

Translation:

Receipt from the storehouse of *gCen-lung.*

When to the Great Protector the king of Gorkha sent an elephant as a captive animal, the following items have to be put into our account:

When the invited representative together with the mahout (*glang-brdzi*) reached *Gad-pa ser-gling* seven *ru'i-khal* of roasted barley flour (*rtsam-pa*), two and a half goat halves of meat, three *ru'i-khal* of split lentils, two *mkhar-khal* and fourteen *nyag* of butter, fifty eggs (*bya-'bras*), and, as elephant fodder, twenty-five pieces of bread (*krad-skor*) were given in addition to the extra provisions (*zur-chas*). The .... day of the second month in the *me-phag* year.

Seal

In conclusion, the given examples seem to show that in both spheres of the Tibetan central government, the religious and the political (*chos-srid zung-'brel*), administrative routines were well thought out and controlled to a great extent by bureaucratic procedures even on the lower level. The dominant principles applied seem to be, as I see it, common administrative rather than specifically Buddhist ones.

6. I thank Mr. Lobsang Shastri for kindly drawing my attention to this document, and the former director Mr. Gyatso Tsering for allowing me to work with it.
7. See Heinrich Harrer, *Lost Lhasa: Heinrich Harrer's Tibet*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992, p. 162.
8. I am very grateful to Mr. Grags-pa-rnam-rgyal, archivist in the LTWA, who kindly helped me to decipher the *skyu-yig* of this document. To Philip Pierce I owe the correction of my English and a careful draft reading.

CONCEPT OF THE ĀDIBUDDHA

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The Biblical conception of creation has conditioned the understanding of the word "*ādibuddha*". The prophet Isaiah comforted Israel in exile that Jahweh is not merely the god of Israel, but the only God, the omnipotent, who brought all things into being by a free act of creation. He created man, and a fruitful place for his abode, heaven and earth. The god of creation says "I am Jahweh, that doeth all these things" (*Isaiah* 45.6.7). The *New Testament* represents Him as the Father who through the Son made the world (*John* 1.3, *Colossians* 1.15-18, etc.). In the 19th century Church's doctrine of creation was based on the acceptance of *Genesis* 1 as history and Protestant theologians believed that the world was miraculously created out of nothing in six days, some six thousand years ago. This truth of revelation closed all questions. When someone asked what God did before the world was created, St. Augustine answered, "He made a hell for the inquisitive". Biblical monotheism, in which One God and *Genesis* are the foundation, was the prime criterion of European scholarship for the comprehension of any religion in the 19th century.

At the beginning of the 19th century, when Hodgson (1828: 42) set to understand Buddhism, the first question he put to Pandit Amritananda was, "How and when was the world created?" The Pandit answered, "In the KV it is said that when nothing else was, śambhu was, that is self-existent (Svayambhū). As he was before all, he is also called Ādibuddha. śambhu commanded Padmapāṇi to commence creation". Further on (p. 46), in reply to "who is Buddha", he said that this is "one of the names which we give to God, whom we also call Ādi-Buddha, because he was before all, and is not created, but is the creator". For the comprehension of Hodgson, the Pandit used the term *aiśvarika*, "theistic", fused Hindu and Buddhist elements, and provided his own interpretation. Ever since, Ādibuddha and theistic Buddhism have been discussed and imposed on Buddhist texts without substantive success.

Korosi (1833: 21) cited the *Chos ḥbyuṅ* of Padma dkar po which says that Cilupa came to Nalanda and wrote on the gate, "He who does not know the Ādibuddha (*mchog gi dang poḥi saṅs rgyas*) knows not the Kālacakra". In another paper, Korosi (1838: 73) said that *dharmakāya*, as the primary essence of all things, is denominated by several names, as Ādibuddha (*thog maḥi saṅs rgyas*). He did not correlate Ādibuddha to God.

Burnouf (1844: 581) considered Ādibuddha as a new kind of Buddhism.

Waddell (1894: 126) identifies Ādibuddha with Śākyamuni in the following words of a Sūtra: "From the very beginning (*ādita eva*) have I roused ... them to be fit for their Bodhisattva position". Further on (p. 13O), he says that reformed sects call Ādibuddha "Vajradhara", and the unreformed call him Samantabhadra.

De la Vallée Poussin (1908: 93-100) spoke of Ādibuddha as the theistic system of the Buddhism of Nepal, and praised Hodgson for his systematic and complete account of this theistic (*aiśvarika*) theory. He checked the texts on which it was supposed to rest, and saw through the fabrications of Amritananda. The textual quotations supplied to Hodgson were rightly termed by De la Vallée Poussin as, "these mutilated testimonies, this tradition arranged with a view to meet questions conceived in an altogether European spirit". De la Vallée Poussin clearly stated that (i) the passages of the verse version of the KV where Ādibuddha, Svayambhū and Ādinatha appear, has no parallel in the earlier prose version; (ii) the second point made by him is that Ādibuddha and Paramādibuddha are closely connected with the Kālacakra-tantra; (iii) Mañjuśrī is called Ādibuddha in the *Nāma-saṅgīti* (verses 55, 100); (iv) the Tantras have an Ādibuddha in Vajrasattva-Vajradhara; (v) "The Ādibuddha system consists ... in superimposing on the five or six Buddhas (Vajrasattva included) a Being who ... is nevertheless a god" (p. 100).

Eliot (1921: 3.387-388) speaks of an "Ādibuddha or primordial Buddha God, from whom all other Buddhas are derived. It is possible that it represents a last effort of Central Asian Buddhism to contend with Muslims, which instead of denying the bases of Mohammed's teaching tried to show that monotheism (like everything else) could be found in Buddhism – a method of argument frequent in India... Under the

influence of the Kālacakra, the Lamas did not become theists in the sense of worshipping one supreme God, but they identified with the Ādibuddha some particular deity, varying according to the sects. Thus, Samantabhadra ... was selected by some".

Evans-Wentz (1927: 13) rightly points out that those not initiated into the teachings regard Ādibuddha as the Supreme Deity, which is apparently erroneous.

The chapter on Ādibuddha in Getty (1928: 2-3) is a repetition of Hodgson, supplemented by the observations of Eliot.

The *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* (1.213-219) has an entry on Ādibuddha, wherein G. P. Malalasekera says that the concept arose as a part of the development of theistic Buddhism, which was prevalent in Nepal and Java. But, he is emphatic: "It would be a complete misconception to consider the Ādibuddha as just another version of the God Creator" (p. 214).

Asaṅga categorically refutes a Primeval Buddha in the *Sutrālaṅkāra* (ch. 9, Sylvain Lévi's ed., p. 48, S. Bagchi's ed., p. 5O): *na ca kaścid ādibuddho 'sti vinā sambhāreṇa buddhatv-āyogād.* The Tibetan equivalent of Ādibuddha is Thog maḥi saṅs rgyas.

The *Nāma-saṅgīti* of the *Māyājāla-tantra* was commented upon by Candragomin, a contemporary of Candrakīrti in the 7th century (Tāranātha 1869: 152). So the text of the *Nāma-saṅgīti* should belong to the 6th century. Its verse 58 has the word "*paramādya*", and verse 100 has *ādibuddha* (RaghuVira 1960: 33, 49; Wayman 1985: 79/6.17, 93/8.24; Banarsi Lal 1994: 43-44, 70). The Tibetan for *paramādya* is *mchog gi daṅ po, ādibuddha* is *daṅ poḥi saṅs rgyas.* The Amṛta-kaṇikā commentary of Ravi-śrī-jñāna equates *paramādya* with *Vajrasattva* (Lal 1994: 44): *Vajrasatttva-rūpatvāt paramādyaḥ*) and explains *ādibuddha* as *ekakṣaṇa-pañcākāra-viṃśatyākāra-māyājāl-ābhisambodhi-lakṣaṇaṃ sukham ādibuddha ityarthaḥ.* Vibhūticandra's subcommentary *Amṛta-kaṇik-oddyota-nibandha* (Lal 1994: 177) clarifies: *sāṃkleśikā vā rāgādayaḥ / vaiyavadānikāḥ śuddhi-hetavo bodhipakṣādyas teṣāṃ vastuto 'satvāt / akāraḥ praśleṣaḥ / a ādibuddhaḥ / anādibuddha ityarthaḥ /.* While *paramādya* is correlated to Vajrasattva, *ādibuddha* is taken as a philosophical concept. The translation and comments on the Chinese versions of the *Nāma-saṅgīti* (T 1187-1190), by Shinten Sakai (EBu.1.217), have to be revised in the light of the Sanskrit original.

The Tanjur has a *sādhana* to Ādibuddha-jñānasattva-Mañjuśrī by Avadhūtipa, translated into Tibetan by Dharmaśrīmitra of India and by Lotsava Chos kyi bzaṅ po (Cordier 2.279 no.14, Toh 2604). It is entitled *ḥJam dpal Ye śes sems dpaḥ daṅ poḥi saṅs rgyas zhes bya baḥi sgrub thabs = Jñānasattva-mañjuśrī-ādibuddha-nāma-sādhana.*

Kanyū Kabese (EBu. 1.218-219) says that the *dharmakāya* of the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* is the Ādibuddha, but he does not indicate the source of his speculations.

Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan (SHK) is an Old Javanese text of the 10th century. Eliot (1921: 3.173) spoke of "a primordial principle, called Advaya and apparently equivalent to the Nepalese Ādibuddha". The SHK speaks of the Ādibuddha-spirit (*ambĕk ādibuddha*) of a *cakravartin* king who has conquered powerful enemies and who can grant all the wishes of all beings. Such a mind is *Mahāmunivara-cintāmaṇi-samādhi* (LC. 1995: 4.404-405). The word "*ādibuddha*" occurs only in thls passage in the SHK. It occurs in another Old Javanese text, *Devaruci* 5.5: *ādibuddha ṛṣi*, alongside *hyaṅ buddha-tattva ṛṣi* and *jina ṛṣi* 4.5.

The SHK has three words: "*deva viśeṣa*", "*bhaṭāra viśeṣa*" and "*mahā viśeṣa* ". The Deva Viśeṣa (LC. 1995: 4.389, 367) of the Buddhists, according to the express statement of the SHK, corresponds to:

Bhaṭāra Paramaśūnya
Bhaṭāra Paramaśiva
Bhaṭāra Puruṣa of the disciples of Bhagavān Kapila
Saṅ Hyaṅ Ātmā of the disciples of Kaṇāda
Bhaṭāra Nirguṇa of the Vaiṣṇava followers.

He reveals himself as Ratnatraya and the Five Tathāgatas according to the *ācāryas* of Sākāra.

Bhatāra Viśeṣa, "The Supreme Being", occurs in the Old Javanese text *Vṛhaspati-tattva* (ed. Sudarshana Singhal 4.14, 48.1, 49.7, 80.3). The SHK lays down that a practitioner should follow the four kinds of yoga, the four kinds of *bhāvanā*, the four Noble Truths (*ārya-satya*), and the ten *pāramitās*. These constitute the

mahāguhya. The next plane of realisation to attain *siddhi* is *paramaguhya*, the embodiment of the Supreme Being (Bhaṭāra Viśeṣa, LC. 1995: 4.373-374). The exoteric path is *mahāguhya*, and the esoteric is *paramaguhya*. The Bhaṭāra Viśeṣa is the summum of the esoteric tantras. *Paramaguhya* is the visualisation of the Supreme Buddha or Mahā Viśeṣa (ibid. 367, 370). Deva Viśeṣa, Bhaṭāra Viśeṣa and Mahā Viśeṣa refer to the highest Buddha of a particular tantric system.

The Kālacakra-tantra is entitled *Paramādibuddha-oddhṛta śrī-kālacakra-tantrarāja* (Toh. 362), in Tibetan *Mchog gi daṅ poḥi saṅs rgyas las phyuṅ ba rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi ḥkhor lo zhes bya ba*, "The Kālacakra-tantrarāja extracted from the Paramādibuddha". The longer and original Kālacakra was enunciated by Paramādibuddha: *yad vyākṛtaṃ daśabalena purālpatantraṃ guhyādhipasya gaditāt paramādibuddhāt,* as stated in the Vimalaprabhā (p. 3). The Vimalaprabhā (p. 12) clarifies that Paramādibuddha is Kālacakra (*traidhātuka-vandita-caraṇ-āravindena traidhātuk-aika-cakravartinā paramādibuddhena niranvayena śrī-kālacakra-bhagavatā Sucandr-ādhyeṣitena dvādaśa-sahasraṃ paramādibuddhaṃ niranvayaṃ kālacakraṃ tantrarāja-*...). The commentary (p. 18) repeats the equation: *paramādibuddhaṃ kālacakraṃ* Again on p. 52 it is said that a great Master should preach the Paramādibuddha (i. e. Kālacakra) and deserving disciples should hear it (*evaṃ paramādibuddhaṃ mokṣārthibhiḥ sac-chiṣyaiḥ śrotavyaṃ sad-guruṇā deśitavyaṃ iti*). Kālacakra is termed Ādibuddha (*ādibuddho niranvayaḥ kālacakro bhagavān abhidheyaḥ*, p. 13). The Lord (Kālacakra) is termed Ādibuddha (*atha ādibuddho bhagavān vācyaḥ / vācakam ādibuddham abhidhānam iti vācya-vācaka-lakṣaṇaḥ*, p. 15). Ādibuddha and Paramādibuddha are one (*ādibuddhaḥ paramādibuddhaḥ*, p. 17). Kālacakra was an entirely *new* first principle, evolving on its own, and hence an Ādibuddha. To emphasize its originality and primacy, *parama* was prefixed and the new expression was *paramādibuddha*. Tucci's (1949: 1.236) statement that "Ādibuddha in this sense is especially proper to the Kālacakra system, which ... issued out of a school not unacquainted with theistic systems" assumes that Ādibuddha is a theistic term. The Kālacakra was beyond the *anuttara-yoga tantras* which had emanated from Vajradhara, the Ādibuddha. Hence he was his own Ādibuddha, and being superior to them he was the Supreme Ādibuddha or Param-ādibuddha. As the last creation of the Tantric masters, the Kālacakra was the highest point (*parama*) of esoterism and, *sui generis*, an Ādibuddha, a Buddha on his own. Malalasekera (EBu. 1.213) says, "The fundamental feature of this doctrine is that of a primordial Buddha from whom all other Buddhas are ultimately derived". Ādibuddha is neither a doctrine, nor are "all other" Buddhas derived from it so far as the texts go.

Kabese (EBu. 1.218) says that in the *Pradīp-oddyotana-ṭīkā* the Ādibuddha is Vajradhara or Vajrasattva.

Nāgārjuna in his *Aṣṭādaśa-paṭala-vistara-vyākhyā* (Wayman 1977: 61-62) sets forth three levels of Vajradhara:

(i) Causal (*hetu*) Vajradhara is Mahāvajradhara, the *ādinatha*.
(ii) Fruitional (*phala*) Vajradhara is Akṣobhya and other Tathāgatas.
(iii) Vajradhara of Means (*upāya*) is of three kinds: guardian of the place, of oneself and of yoga.

Ādinatha is the presiding lord, and parallel to Ādibuddha.

Reference to Ādibuddha occurs in the very late metrical version of the KV. This version (LC. 999: 39 f.) says that in times yore, when there was the vast vacuum (*mahāśūnya*), when even the five gross elements had not come into being, emanated as pure light, *ādibuddha*, immaculate ... self-born (*svayambhū*), *mahābuddha*, *ādinatha*, *maheśvara*. He undertook the *samādhi* of the creation of the universe. From his eyes carne forth Sun and Moon; from his forehead, Maheśvara; from his shoulders, Brahmā, and so on. He allotted distinct duties of creation to them. There is no mention in the Chinese translation of the prose version done by T'ien Hsi-tsai in AD 983 (K 1088, Arthur Waley MCB 1.358). In the *Svayambhū-purāṇa* (ed. Haraprasad Sastri 1900: 56), Brahmā recites a *stotra* to Svayambhū:

triratna-mūrtaye ādibauddha-rūpa svayambhuve /

A similar word is "*ādivajra*" in Mkhas grub rje's fundamentals of the tantras (Lessing / Wayman 1968: 31, 33, 243), where he explains that the word "*ādi*" (*daṅ po*) means "original" (*thog ma*). The meaning of

"original" is that a previously awakened but not expanded (*buddha-avibuddha) state becomes newly awakened and expanded (*buddha-vibuddha).

The interpretation of Ādibuddha (*saṅs rgyas daṅ po*) as enunciated by Tucci (1949: 1.236) is clear as well as close to Buddhist thought. He gives three semantic contexts:

(i) Asaṅga (*Sūtrālaṅkāra* 9, p. 77) refutes the opinion that Buddha is Buddha from the beginning, which implies no conquest of Buddhahood.

(ii) In Vajrayāna, Ādibuddha is the primeval cause. It is a principle common to all the *anuttara tantras*. Ādibuddha has several names according to the schools.

(iii) Ādibuddha is especially proper to the Kālacakra system. "It represents a new aspect of the first principle: the Ādibuddha" (Tucci 1949: 2.371), though its experiences run parallel to those of the Guhyasamāja.

Conclusion

Ādibuddha does not refer to a theistic God the Creator, or to a Primordial Buddha in a universal theistic sense, but is a generic appellation applied to the Supreme (*ādi*) Enlightened Being (*buddha*) of a specific school or system. The Old Javanese compendium *Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan* speaks of Deva Viśeṣa or Bhaṭāra Viśeṣa, the "Supreme Being", in various denominations. Ādibuddha and these two expressions are generic terms. As a generic term, it is applied to different Buddhas according to the schools. Thus, among the Nyingmapas, the *yab yum* Samantabhadra is the Ādibuddha (Dudjom Rinpoche *et al.* 1991: 115 f.). He is called Ādinātha (*gdod maḥi mgon*) in the lineage of the transmission of the Mahāniṣpanna-yoga (*rdzogs chen*, LC 1991: 1707). He is Vajrasattva among the Kadampas, and Vajradhara among the Gelukpas. The topmost chapel of the Gyantse Kumbum has a gilded statue of Vajradhara sitting in *vajrāsana* on a throne, with a vajra and bell in his hands crossed in front of his chest. The Kings of Śambhala and the masters of Kālacakra are painted. Vajradhara is the summum of the Tantras (Ricca / Bue 1993: 31, 312-313).

Ādibuddhas are also found at the top of thangka paintings, e.g. Amitābha on the top of Padmasambhava, Vajradhara over Bu ston, *yab yum* Samantabhadra over Che mchog Heruka (Rhie / Thurman 1991: 176 no. 49, 198 no. 60, 212 no. 67). Amitābha is at the top of the four-faced Vajradhātu-Vairocana in the *Tibetan Art Calendar* of September 1991.

The word Buddha itself is not strictly the proper name of Śākyamuni. It is a philosophic term connoting an Enlightened Being (from the root *budh*, "to be enlightened"). The hierarchy of Buddhahood may be formulated as follows:

Bodhisattva
|
Buddha
|
Ādibuddha (*e. g.* Vajradhara)
|
Paramādibuddha = Kālacakra

The Nyingma school classified its tradition into "Nine Yānas" (*theg pa dgu*): three Sutric Yānas, three Outer Tantric Yānas, and three Inner Tantric Yānas. In them the three Outer Tantric Yānas represent the cults of Light or phototropism and the three Inner Yānas are arcane cults or erototropism. The phototropic Yānas are manifested by Amitābha, Vairocana and Mahāvairocana, while the erototropic Yānas are manifestations of Akṣobhya or Vajradhara. Vajradhara as the highest is an Ādibuddha. After the climax of the evolution of Tantrism, Kālacakra was the Paramādibuddha or Supreme Ādibuddha.

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THE *RGYUD-BZHI* AND THEIR BASIC SOURCE

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The *Amrta-hrdaya-astanga-guhyopadesa-tantra* (as it was known in Sanskrit) or *Bdud-rtsi snying-po yan-lag brgyad-pa gsang-ba man-ngag gi rgyud* (as it is called in Tibetan) is briefly called *Rgyud-bzhi* (*Catur-tantra* in Sanskrit) because the text has four distinct and different parts:

1. *Rtsa-rgyud* (Skt. *Mula-tantra*; primary text). It has 6 chapters.
2. *Bshad pa'i rgyud* (Skt. *Akhyata-tantra*; explanatory text). It has 31 chapters, which are grouped into 11 *gnas* (Skt. *sthana*; sections).
3. *Man-ngag rgyud* (Skt. *Upadesa-tantra*; text of instructions). It has 92 chapters, which are grouped into 15 *skabs* (Skt. *prakarana*; topics).
4. *Phyi-ma'i rgyud* (Skt. *Uttara-tantra*; subsidiary text). It has 25 chapters which are grouped into 4 *mdo* (Skt. *vibhaga*; divisions).

In addition, there are 2 concluding chapters. Thus, this work has 156 chapters in total.

In the sixth century B.C., during the life time of Lord Buddha, medical and such other faculties of Taxila University used to attract students from different parts of the then Bharata-varsa and abroad. Jivaka, the son of the King of Magadha took his medical training from this university, and because of his proficiency in Ayurveda, he was thrice crowned as the King of physicians. It is this Jivaka who was present in the retinue of Buddhists during the teaching of Medicine by Lord Buddha in his emanated form as Rsi Vidya-jnana. It is this Jivaka who is the author of the *Rgyud-bzhi*, according to Tibetan tradition, as enshrined in the *Zur-lugs* or the school of Zur-mkhar Mnyam-nyid Rdo-rje, and quoted by the famous commentator of this work, Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, pp. 358-359 of his *Khog-'bugs* (published by T. Y. Tashigong, Leh 1970). According to Zur-mkhar, the *Rgyud-bzhi* was transmitted as follows:

(1) Ston-pa Sman-gyi-bla (Teacher Bhaisajya-guru)
(2) Gsung-ba-po Drang-srong Rig-pa'i Ye-shes (Speaker Rsi Vidya-jnana)
(3) Sdud-pa-po Drang-srong Yid-las-skyes (Co-ordinator Rsi Manasija)
(4) Tsho-byed Gzhon-nu (Kumara Jivaka)
(5) Dpal-mgon Klu-sgrub (Nagarjuna)
(6) Dpal-ldan Dpa' bo (Aryasura; Vagbhata is also known by this name)
(7) Kha-che'i Pan-chen Zla-ba-mngon-par-dga'-ba (Kashmirian Pandit Candra-nandana)
(8) Lo-chen Bai-ro-tsa-na (Great translator Vairocana)
(9) Mnga'-bdag Khri-srong-lde'u-bstan
(10) Gter-ston Grwa-pa Mngon-shes
(11) Dbus-pa Dar-grags
(12) Rog-ston Dkon-mchog-skyabs
(13) Rigs-'dus Sman-pa'i-rgyal-po G'yu-thog Yon-tan Mgon-po
(14) Sum-ston Ye-shes-gzungs
(15) 'Tsho-byed Gzhon-nu Ye-shes
(16) G'yu-thog Mkhas-pa 'Bum-seng
(17) Gtsang-ston Sangs-rgyas Rin-chen
(18) Mkhas-pa Don-grub Rin-chen
(19) Bstan-'dzin Don-drub Rgyal-mtshan
(20) Brang-ti Dkon-mchog Rgyal-mtshan
(21) Brang-ti Dpal-ldan 'Tsho-byed
(22) Dge-slong Tshal-pa Dbang-grags
(23) Mkhas-mchog Phun-tshogs Bzang-po
(24) Zur-mkhar Mnyam-nyid Rdo-rje

The first three in the above list are celestial beings. The first human being who is in the lineage of transmission of the *Rgyud-bzhi* is Kumara Jivaka. According to this lineage of transmission, Candra-nandana (eighth century) taught this text to Vairocana and helped the latter in its Tibetan translation. Vairocana presented this work to the then King of Tibet Khri-srong Lde'u-btsan in the presence of the senior G'yu-thog, among others. Since the time was not auspicious for the propagation of this health-science in Tibet, on the advice of Guru Padmasambhava, the translated text was kept hidden (as *gter ma*) in one of the

pillars of the central hall of the upper shrine of Samye monastery near Lhasa. As predicted by the Guru, this work was taken out of this pillar in 1038 by Grwa-pa Mngon-shes, and was widely propagated in Tibet.

In the eighth century, the scholar-physician G'yu-thog Yon-tan Mgon-po (the senior) visited India three times. He was earlier acquainted with Vairocana's translation of the *Rgyud-bzhi*, and revised (translated) this work with the help of the Ayurvedic physicians of India. His successor, the junior G'yu-thog also visited India and its neighbouring countries for six times in the twelfth century and redacted as well as supplemented the *Rgyud-bzhi* in consultation with the Ayurvedic physicians of those countries.

In the fourteenth century, there were two reputed Tibetan doctors, namely, Byang-pa and Zur-mkhar-pa. They wrote two different commentaries. Byang-pa's commentary was called *Legs-bshad Nor-bu* (Skt. *Subhasita-ratna*). The commentaries of these two authors were conceptually different because of which two different schools, namely *Byang-lugs* and *Zur-lugs* took their origin. Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas Rgya-mtsho (1653-1705), the Regent of the Fifth Dalai Lama, who was acquainted with these two schools of thought, wrote several works on Tibetan medicine, among others. His commentary on the *Rgyud-bzhi*, called *Bai-ḍurya sNgon-po* (Skt. *Nila-vaidurya*, "Blue Lapis lazuli"), is the most exhaustive, authentic and popular among the Tibetan physicians. He often quoted texts and views of Indian Ayurvedic authors in order to justify his method of interpretation of this text. The theoretical concepts and practical applications of the Indo-Tibetan medicine have been painted by him in the form of thangkas.

It will be seen from the above, that Jivaka, the original author of this work, and Candranadana, the scholar-physician who taught this text to Vairocana and helped him to translate it into Tibetan, both were Ayurvedic scholars proficient in Sanskrit. The two G'yu-thog Yon-tan Mgon-po, Senior and Junior, enriched and revised it during their several visits to India, with the help of Indian Ayurvedic physicians. Therefore, it is no wonder that the entire *Rgyud-bzhi* and its several commentaries (as mentioned above) are based upon the fundamental concepts of the Ayurveda, like *tri-dosa, sapta-dhatu, tri-mala, panca-mahabhuta, rasa, guna, virya, vipaka,* and *prakrti.* It describes the use of medicinal plants which grow in India and not exclusively in Tibet or its neighbouring countries.

There is no mention of his authorship in the text because he is not the original author of this work, and he composed it according to the instructions of the emanations of Lord Buddha. As in the case of the Ayurveda, this implies a celestial origin of the text. Similarly, the authorship of many other Ayurvedic works is not mentioned in the text. For example, the author's name of the *Rasarnava-tantra*, which is composed in the form of a dialogue between Siva and Parvati, is not given in the text.

The eternal and cordial relationship between India and Tibet has few equals in the history of mankind. Though politically different, geographically separate and ethnologically dissimilar, people of these two lands hold each other with the highest esteem. The term "Tibet" is derived from the Sanskrit "*Trivistapa*," synonym of "heaven," the abode of spiritual happiness, where people aspire to go not only after death but during their lifetime. Lake Manasarovara and Mount Kailasa, which are in Tibet, are the most sacred places for Indians, as these are considered to be the abodes of Lord Siva and his consort, Parvati, the creators and protectors of the universe.

Tibetans hold India (Bharata-varsa) in equally high esteem, if not more. The Tibetan term for India (Bharata-varsa) is *Rgya-gar*, where *rgya* stands for a "vast (country)" and *gar* for *dkar-po*, literally meaning "white," which has an allusion to *sattva-guna*, the abode of all virtues, including purity, compassion, non-violence, sacrifice, wisdom, tolerance, and eternal happiness. Tibetans were closer to other neighbours geographically, politically, culturally and ethnologically; and the Tibetan language belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese group. Yet, in spite of all these, Tibetans preferred to base their script on one of the Indian scripts that are entirely different from those of their neighbours. It was not adopted through private channels but officially, for which a high-power delegation, headed by the scholar-minister Thon-mi Sambhota, was deputed during the seventh century. Exchange of scholars between Tibet and India – in different fields like religion, philosophy, medicine, astrology and arts – continued throughout the history except during the cruel foreign invasions.

It is because of the strenuous efforts of these scholars, twenty two Ayurvedic works, among thousands on other fields, were translated into Tibetan language and included in their canonical scriptures. The most popular and commonly used non-canonical text on medicine briefly called *Rgyud-bzhi* (Skt. *Catur-tantra*; Four-fold treatise) is the product of the magnificent efforts of these scholars. As the internal evidence shows, this work was originally composed in Sanskrit, in India, and its original title is *Amrta-hrdaya-astanga (anga-asta)-guhyopadesa-tantra.* This was translated into Tibetan later, and the Tibetan title for this translated text was coined as *Bdud-rtsi* (Skt. *amrta*) *snying-po* (Skt. *hrdaya*) *yan-lag brgyad-pa* (Skt. *astanga*) *gsang-ba* (Skt. *guhya*) *man-ngag* (Skt. *upadesa*) *gi* (Skt. *sya*) *rgyud* (Skt. *tantra*).

The Ayurveda is not an exclusively Hindu system of medicine. Because Sanskrit, in the past, was used for writing many non-Hindu scriptures, so also the Ayurveda was patronized by many non-Hindu scholar-physicians. Many Jain saints composed well-reputed works on the Ayurveda, although in therapeutics they excluded the use of animal products, and even honey. In several Islamic countries, the Ayurvedic works were translated and used in practice. Many Buddhist scholars composed works on the Ayurveda. Vagbhata, the author of the *Astanga-hrdaya* and the *Astanga-sangraha*, was himself a Buddhist, as it is evident from his invocation, etc., in these works, and these books are commonly used even today by Ayurvedic physicians of India. Many works on *Rasa-sastra* (iatrochemistry) were composed by Buddhist saints who are held in high esteem even today by the Ayurvedic physicians of India. Many Sanskrit works on medicine composed by Buddhists and non-Buddhists were translated into Tibetan and incorporated into the Tibetan *Bstan 'gyur*. Similarly, the *Rgyud-bzhi*, in its translated form, is popular in Tibet, Mongolia and Buriatia. This is in conformity with this secular outlook of the Ayurveda. Though composed by a Buddhist, a direct disciple of Lord Buddha, on the basis of the teachings of Buddha's emanations, and though translated and redacted by Buddhist scholars, its non-inclusion in Buddhist scriptures as a canonical work is a matter for research.

Like many other Ayurvedic texts, the original Sanskrit text of the *Rgyud-bzhi* is no more extant in Sanskrit. Even the popular Ayurvedic text called *Caraka-samhita*, which is a redaction of the *Agnivesa-samhita*, is not available in its entirety, and was later supplemented by the less known scholar Drdhabala, in the third century.

Unlike different other systems of medicine, the Ayurveda – the "Science of life" – has a long history, and Bharat-varsa (not confined to the present political India) was a vast country. Therefore, what to speak of classical works of the Ayurveda even several recensions of the Vedas are no more extant because of historical and temporal vicissitudes. That however does not mean that these scriptures and classical works including the original Sanskrit text of the *Rgyud-bzhi* were non-existent.

Pulse examination (*nadi-pariksa*), with which an Ayurvedic physician is identified, was described even in the *Caraka-samhita*, and reference from this was extracted in brief by Todaramalla in the *Ayurveda-saukhya* of *Todarananda* (see Bhagwan Dash and Lalitesh Kashyap, *Basic Principles of Ayurveda. Based on Ayurveda Saukhyam of Todarananda*, New Delhi: Concept, 1980, pp. 489-491).

Description of the properties of new drugs, ingredients of food and recipes in the *Rgyud-bzhi* is in conformity with the tradition of the Ayurveda. Ayurvedic texts of different regions have added several new drugs available in their locality and different recipes are preferably used by the physicians in different regions of the country. The *materia medica* of the Ayurveda was periodically enriched with the inclusion of several exotic drugs. Metals, minerals, gems and costly stones, scarcely mentioned in Ayurvedic classics were subsequently added and are popularly used even today for the treatment of obstinate an otherwise incurable diseases. During different periods of history, new recipes out of the experience of physicians were included in Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia. Such new drugs, recipes and ingredients of food were included in the *Rgyud-bzhi* and their properties were described on the basis of the fundamental principles of the Ayurveda according to recognized tradition.

Several new diseases like *phiranga* (syphilis), not known in Bharata-varsa earlier, appeared because of foreign contacts, etc. Their etiology, pathogenesis, signs, symptoms and treatment were described in Ayurvedic texts on the basis of the fundamental principles of the Ayurveda. Similarly, many diseases not

mentioned in the earlier Ayurvedic texts but found in Tibet because of geographical conditions, etc., were included in the *Rgyud-bzhi* and explained according to the basic principles of the Ayurveda.

There are eight specialized branches common to the Ayurveda and the Tibetan medicine, as enshrined in the *Rgyud-bzhi*. Depending upon the specific requirements, the Ayurvedic texts have described these eight branches in different order, a new specialized branch having been introduced in the place of the classical one. For example, Narahari Pandita (seventeenth century), in his *Raja-nighantu*, mentioned the "Dravya-guna" (*materia medica*) as one of the specialized branches of the Ayurveda, in the place of "Salakya-tantra" (treatment of the diseases of eye, ear, nose and throat). It is, therefore, quite in conformity with the Ayurvedic tradition that in the *Rgyud-bzhi*, the "Mo-nad" (treatment of maternal diseases) has been taken as a specialized branch in the place of the "Salakya-tantra". This is indicative of the progressive outlook of the Ayurveda as followed in the *Rgyud-bzhi*.

This encyclopaedic work, deals with the eight *yan-lag* or *anga* (specialized branches) as follows:

(a) *Las* or *Kayacikisa* (the specialized branch dealing with the treatment of internal diseases) is described in 70 chapters (nos. 1-70 in the *Man-ngag Rgyud*).

(b) *Byis* or *Bala-tantra* (the specialized branch dealing with paediatrics) is described in 3 chapters (nos. 71-73).

(c) *Mo-nad* or *Matr-roga* (the specialized branch dealing with maternal diseases) is described in 3 chapters (nos. 74-76).

(d) *Dug* or *Visa* or *Agada-tantra* (the specialized branch dealing with poisons) is described in 3 chapters (nos. 87-89).

(e) *Gdon* or *Bhuta-vidya* (the specialized branch dealing with diseases caused by the seizures of evil spirits) in 5 chapters (nos. 77-81).

(f) *Rma* or *Salya-tantra* (the specialized branch dealing with surgery) is described in 5 chapters (nos. 82-86).

(g) *Bcud-len* or *Rasayana-tantra* (the specialized branch dealing with rejuvenation therapy) is described in 1 chapter (no. 90).

(h) *Ro-tsa* or *Vajikarana-tantra* (the specialized branch dealing with aphrodisiacs) is described in 2 chapters (nos. 91-92).

The unique feature of the *Rgyud-bzhi* is the systematic arrangement of all the Ayurvedic topics. All the concepts concerning health, ill-health and therapeutics are presented in the form of a tree having three roots, nine trunks, forty seven branches and 224 leaves including two flowers and three fruits.

On an invitation, I had the opportunity to attend the International Academic Conference on Tibetan Medicine held at Lhasa in July 2000. After the conference I visited Samye monastery for an on-the-spot study. In the monastery I saw the cave-like structure where Vairocana stayed (at present there is a statue of the saint-scholar) and gave a final touch to his translation of the *Rgyud-bzhi*, among others. I also collected the historical facts regarding his staying in reclusion from the Lamas of the monastery. I had the opportunity to meet the Head Lama of Samye, who informed me of having seen the original Sanskrit text of the *Rgyud-bzhi*, i.e the *Amrta-hrdaya-asranga-guhyopadesa-tantra*. Even though many original Sanskrit texts which were translated into Tibetan are still preserved there, he was not sure of the fate of Tivaka's work, because many of these original works were destroyed in fire. He wished me to prepare a catalogue of the existing Sanskrit texts which have survived, and offered me all facilities to do it. Unfortunately, I had to return to India next morning and could not avail myself of the facilities he offered to me. For this, I am awaiting the next opportunity.

The Ayurveda and the Ayurvedic physicians of India will ever remain grateful to Tibet and the Tibetan physicians who preserved this monumental and encyclopaedic work of the Ayurveda and expanded it with many details on the fundamental principles, embryology, anatomy, methods of examining a patient, and therapeutics.

A FORGOTTEN INCARNATION LINEAGE: THE *YOL-MO-BA SPRUL-SKUS* (16TH TO 18TH CENTURIES)

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One of the most fascinating subjects for someone dealing with Tibetan Buddhism is doubtless the phenomenon of conscious rebirth and the existence of so-called "lines of rebirth" (*skyes rabs*), which may endow a spiritual teacher with a high degree of religious and political power. As studies already exist on this topic,[1] I should like in the following merely to present a further case study of this phenomenon, one that is interesting for several reasons. What I am most concerned about is, first, to demonstrate the process whereby the lineage is constituted as the sequence of its individual representatives and, secondly, to give a summary account of the religious activities of the various members of the lineage in different periods of Tibet's political history. We shall be able in the process to observe not only how an incarnational chain is constituted but also how it later fell into oblivion in the region of its origin.

1. sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po (15th/16th cent.)

The name of the incarnational lineage, "Rebirth from Yol-mo" (*yol mo ba sprul sku*), calls first of all for a more exact definition of the geographical name *Yol-mo*. The latter denotes a region on the Tibet-Nepal border known presently as Helambu. Tibetan authors regarded this region – lying north-east of Kathmandu along the upper reaches of the Melemchi Khola and the Yangri Khola – as a part of Nepal, as the expression "Yol-mo [which is] enclosed by glaciers [in] Nepal" (*bal yul gyi yol mo gangs ra*) shows.[2] The attractions

1. Some useful remarks on the concepts of hierophany and hierocracy – i.e., the spiritual and temporal aspects of a single line of *sprul sku* type rebirth – are provided by D. Seyfort Ruegg, "A Karma bKa' brgyud work on the lineages and traditions of the Indo-Tibetan dBu ma (Madhyamaka)", in Gherardo Gnoli and Luciano Lanciotti, eds., *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata*, Rome: IsMEO (Serie Orientale Roma, LVI, 3), 1988, pp. 1249-1251; they refer mainly to the Karma-pa branch of the bKa'-brgyud-pa school. Compare K.-H. Everding, *Die Präexistenzen der lCang skya Qutuqtus. Untersuchungen zur Konstruktion und historischen Entwicklung einer lamaistischen Existenzlinie*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz (Asiatische Forschungen, 104), 1988, pp. 182-186, on the historical development of Lamaist lines of birth, as well as pp. 208-209, where some general knowledge concerning the constituting principles of recognized rebirth are presented. See also the remarks by Pieter Schwieger, *Die ersten dGe-lugs-pa Hierarchen von Brag-g.yab (1572-1692)*, Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag (Monumenta Tibetica Historica, 2-3), 1989, pp. 14-15, who stresses the importance of "rebirth-chains" for the social status of Tibetan religious personages. The case examples of the last two studies are lines of rebirth of the 17th and 18th centuries from East Tibet and come from the dGe-lugs-pa school. The text *Bod dang bar khams rgya sog bcas kyi bla sprul rnams kyi 'phreng deb gzhung* in *Bod kyi gal che'i lo rgyus dang yig cha bsdams bsgrigs*, Lhasa: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-skrun khang (Gangs can rig mdzod, 16), 1991, pp. 281-369, contains the hitherto most comprehensive list of lines of rebirth. It was compiled in the years between 1814 and 1820 and documents the practice of the Manchu administration to formalize the recognition of an incarnation by the use of lots; this method became famous under the name "testing in the golden urn" (*gser bum du brtags pa*).
2. For this description see gTsang-smyon Heruka (1452-1507), *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur*, Hsining: mTsho-sngon mi-rigs dpe-skrun khang, 1989, p. 122.11; it is part of a list of sacred places where Mi-la ras-pa (1028-1111), under the instructions of his teacher Mar-pa (1012-1097), was said to have applied himself to spiritual practices. This list found its way into various "inventories" (*dkar chag[s]*) and "descriptions of sacred sites" (*gnas yig*); see the translation of the relevant passage in T. Huber, "A Guide to the La-Phyi *Maṇḍala*: History, Landscape and Ritual in South-Western Tibet", in A. W. Macdonald, ed., *Maṇḍala and Landscape*, New Delhi: D. K. Printing World (Emerging Perceptions in Buddhist Studies, 6), 1997, p. 252: "Because Mount dPal-'dar (sic) of Mang-yul and the Snowy Enclave of Yol-mo in Nepal are the places prophesied in the *Avataṃsakasūtra*,

of the surroundings, which lent themselves to the practices of Tibetan yogins and hermits, are impressively portrayed in the songs of Mi-la ras-pa. Yol-mo is a land of blooming mountain flowers where trees dance in the woods, and a playground for monkeys, birds and bees. Rain falls both in the summer and winter; fog banks come together in spring and autumn alike, indistinguishably.

The first founding of a monastery in Yol-mo is made by local historiography to coincide with the arrival of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, a "treasure-discoverer" (*gter ston*) of the rNying-ma-pa school.[3] As written documents concerning this founding, which occurred at the beginning of the 16th century, are available, I here cite from a translation of one of them:

> The man's *rigs* [here "family lineage"] is given as *Shākya bzang-po*, and his *rus* [here "caste"] as *drangs-srong* (Skt. *bāhmin*), he being an emanation of *chos-gloṅ padma dgun-tshan*. He is told to build a gompa in a land where the sky looks like the wheel of worldly existence (*srid-pa'i 'khor-lo*), and the land like the eight-petalled lotus. After receiving this prophecy, he comes by way of Ribu Pomba [Kyirong] to Kathmandu, where he repairs two stūpas, and then he opens the "outer, inner and secret" doors of Yolmo Gangra.[4]

The striking thing in this description of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po's arrival is the fact that Yol-mo gangs-ra is here described as a "hidden land" (*sbas yul*). Both the characterization of an idealized and spiritualized landscape – the sky is like a *bhāvacakra* with eight spokes, the earth like an eight-leafed lotus – and the "opening of the gate [of the sacred site]" (*gnas sgo*) follow the conventional lines of texts dealing with the phenomenon of hidden lands. If the tradition of this genre is drawn on, then Yol-mo gangs-ra is found in a list of seven *sbas-yul*; in this context the paradisiacal site bears the name "Lotus Grove" (*padma'i tshal*).[5]

Besides his opening of the hidden land Lotus Grove (and the founding of the first monastery in Yol-mo), sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po is credited with the renovation of "two stūpas" (*mchod rten rnam gnyis*)

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meditate there." Concerning Mi-la ras-pa's stay in Yol-mo compare the text of gTsang-smyon Heruka, pp. 254.10-264.18; on the circumstances that kept him from going to Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar see *ibid.*, pp. 228.6-246.10. In later sources the name "La-stod Yol-mo gangs-ra" is also common; see *Chos 'byung I*, p. 673.24. For the term *gangs-ra* as a topographical metaphor from the time of the early Tibetan kings see Guntram Hazod, "Die 'Herkunft' und die 'Ankunft' des tibetischen Königs. Zu den Momenten einer Ideologie der Souveränität in der Legende des 'Od lde spu rgyal", in Ernst Steinkellner, ed., *Tibetan History and Language. Studies dedicated to Uray Géza on his seventieth birthday*, Vienna: Arbeitskreis fur Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, 26), 1991, p. 196 and *passim*.

3. Among the finds, the short biography of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po in *Chos 'byung I*, pp. 529.10 ff., lays stress on a treasure cycle called *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ba dbyings sgrol*. The uncovering and transmission of a find of this name, however, is generally ascribed to Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bdud-'joms rdo-rje, the disciple of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po; see, for example, S. G. Karmay, *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988, p. 145. This cycle was commented by both the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682) and the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin Padma 'Phrin-las (1640-1718).

4. See G. E. Clarke, "A Helambu History," *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, 4 (1980), p. 11; in his introduction he says: "The document begins as a future prediction of Padmasambhava in response to a query of his consort as to who will repair Bodhnāth stūpa if it is destroyed, and as to who will "open" Yolmo Gangra." A detailed version of this prophecy was filmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP): *Dang po 'jig rten srid pa chags tshul gyis [gyi] lo rgyud [rgyus] bzur [zur] rtsam [tsam] cig zhu ba*, 8 fols., reel-no. E 2669/5. This text is a concise Buddhist cosmology that, following treatment of the world's composite structure and the religious activities of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, gives a genealogy of the latter's family descendants in the region of Helambu.

5. Concerning the theme "'héros fondateurs', qui 'ouvrent la porte d'un lieu'" see R. A. Stein, *Le Monde en petit. Jardins en miniature et habitations dans la pensée religieuse d'Extrême-Orient*, Paris: Flammarion, 1987, p. 189. For a description of the perfect landscape befitting a holy site see *ibid.*, p. 196: "En haut, le ciel est une roue à huit raies. Au milieu l'espàce médian (*bar-snaṅ*) est orné des huit 'signes fastes' (*bkra-çis rtags-brgyad*, sanskrit *aṣṭamaṅgala*). Et en bas, la Terre est un lotus à huit pétales." For background on the opening of the hidden valley Padma'i tshal and the transfer of the necessary "introductory lists" (*kha byang*) from Rig-'dzin mChog-ldan mgon-po (1497-1531) to sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, see F.-K. Ehrhard, "A 'Hidden Land' in the Tibetan-Nepalese Borderlands", A.

in the Kathmandu Valley. Although this appears to refer to the two stūpas of Svayambhūnāth and Bodhnāth (there exists a late, corrupt tradition mentioning a renovation of Svayambhūnāth), sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po has remained alive in the memories of Tibetans above all as the "discoverer" and restorer of the Bodhnāth stūpa. As I have already presented elsewhere material on the activities of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po at the sacred site Bya-rung kha-shor,[6] I should now like to go briefly into the passage of the above cited prophecy, where it is said that the treasure-discoverer is an incarnation of Chos-glon Padma dGun-tshan [= Chos-blon Padma Gung-btsan]. This ties in with the myth of the stūpa of Bodhnāth and leads to the formation of the former birth lineage of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus.

The inventory of the stūpa "Permission to Do What is Proper" (*bya rung kha shor*), brought to light in the year 1512 by sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po during a renovation of bSam-yas, tells the story of the woman keeper of geese who wheedled from the king of Nepal permission to build a big stūpa, which she then managed to do with the help of her three sons. During the consecration of the edifice the three brothers swore an oath to get together in their next life in the land of snow, that is, Tibet, in order to introduce the Buddhist teaching there. The three brothers were reborn as Śāntarakṣita, the abbot, Khri Srong-lde'u btsan, the king, and Padmasambhava, the tantric master. Along with the main protagonists, the helper who had a key part in the construction also swore an oath: he wished to be reborn as a "Buddhist minister" (*chos blon*).[7]

In the fifth and final chapter of the inventory, it is prophesied that sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po will be a direct reincarnation of this minister, Padma Gung-btsan, and upon him falls anew the task of raising the stūpa to majestic proportions. With its claim to run through the man who helped construct the edifice and through the minister Padma Gung-btsan, the lineage of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus acquired its self-legitimation; we shall see how this scheme of originally two former births was further expanded upon. First, though, some information will be presented to provide a better understanding of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po and the extent of his influence.

W. Macdonald, ed., in *Maṇḍala and Landscape*, New Delhi: D. K. Printing World (Emerging Perceptions in Buddhist Studies, 6), 1997, pp. 338-340. A list of hidden lands according to the Byang-gter tradition is contained in *sBas yul bdun gyi them byang ga'u ma*, in *Ma 'ongs lung bstan gsal ba'i sgron me*, 1, Leh: S. W. Tashigangpa (Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod, 33), 1973, pp. 545.4-548.1. It begins with [bDe-ldan] sKyid-mo lung, which is also located in Nepal (along the upper Buri Gandhaki), while [sBas-pa] Padma'i-tshal is named as the second land.

6. On the rediscovery and renovation of the stūpa by sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, see F.-K. Ehrhard, "The Stūpa of Bodhnāth: A Preliminary Analysis of the Written Sources," *Ancient Nepal: Journal of the Department of Archaeology*, 120 (1990), pp. 7-9. The background to the myth of the stūpa has already been dealt with by A. M. Blondeau, *Annuaire de l'École Pratique des hautes Études, Ve Section, Sciences Religieuses*, 41 (1982/83), pp. 123-126; concerning the date of the text *mChod rten chen po bya rung kha shor gyi lo rgyus thos pas grol ba* see *ibid.*, p. 126: "A en juger par les élements biographiques rassemblés sur Çākya bzaṅ-po, "redécouvreur" en 1512 de l'*Histoire du grand stūpa Bya-rung kha-çor* (texte qui aurait été découvert une première fois puis recaché par lHa-bcun sngon-mo, contemporain de Rwa locāvā), il semble que ce soit lui qui ait fixé sur le *stūpa* de Bodhnāth, qu'il trouve en ruines et qu'il restaure, la légende de Bya-rung kha-çor." An early block print of this most important of texts on the stūpa of Bodhnāth, the printing of which was done in [b]Tsum, was filmed by the NGMPP under reel-no. E 2517/4, 18 fols. On sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po's association with the renovation carried out on Svayambhūnāth by gTsang-smyon Heruka and how this association came about in a late version of the so-called *'Phags pa shing kun dkar chag* see F.-K. Ehrhard, "Further Renovations of Svayambhūnāth-Stūpa (from the 13th to the 17th centuries)," *Ancient Nepal: Journal of the Department of Archaeology*, 123-125 (1991), p. 14, fn. 6.

7. Concerning the various traditions of the myth of Bodhnāth see A. M. Blondeau (as in note 6), pp. 125-128; there it is primarily the traditions of the *gter-ma* and the *sBa-bzhed* that are distinguished from one another. Further, there exists a version of the Bon-po school; see Shar-rdza-ba bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (1859-1933), *Legs bshad rin po che'i gter mdzod dpyod ldan dga' ba'i char*, Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun khang, 1985, pp. 203.16 ff. A more detailed analysis of the myth and its variants has also been undertaken by A. M. Blondeau; see *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Fagernes: 1992, pp. 31-48. Of special interest in this context is the existence of a manuscript of the *Zangs gling ma* biography of Padmasambhava stored in the National Archives, Kathmandu, which has a unique introductory chapter of the myth; it was filmed by the NGMPP under reel-no. AT 28/2.

In the citation reproduced above concerning his person according to the local tradition of Helambu, it is stated that his caste is that of a "Brahmin" (*drang srong*). What we can observe here is the process termed by anthropologists Hinduization or Sanskritization, in which an older – Tibetan – layer of culture is covered over by religio-political concepts of Hinduism. If the Tibetan sources from the 17th to 19th centuries are consulted, what clearly emerges is that *drang-srong* is a corruption of the toponym Gram-so/Drang-so, a region in western gTsang where sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po was born.[8]

Besides in his home province, the treasure-discoverer was active at the royal court of Mang-yul Gung-thang as teacher of the prince Kun-bzang Nyi-zla grags-pa (1540-1560); in Mustang (*glo bo*), where he taught the same disciples as Glo-bo mKhan-chen bSod-nams lhun-grub (1441-1525); and finally in Byang Ngam-ring, the political centre of the province of La-stod Byang.[9] What in my opinion offers the best explanation for this presence in the religious and political centres of south-western Tibet and Nepal is sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po's role as master and lineage-holder of the Byang-gter tradition. Among other things, he was the teacher of the two brothers mNga'-ris Paṇ-chen Padma dbang-rgyal (1487-1542) and mNga'-ris Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje (b. 1512), the latter of whom had an important part to play within the lineage of the Northern Treasures; for this reason I shall deal briefly with one of the localities where the transmission of the teachings occurred.

Episodes involving meetings between sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po and Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje are described in various passages of the latter's biography. Among the teachings Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje received during the first meeting with the master we find, interestingly, a treasure work entitled *mChod rten dmar po'i gter ma*, and it is said that he wanted to accompany sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po in the role of an attendant during the renovation of Bya-rung kha-shor but then was unable to do so. When finally after some years – in other words, shortly after the renovation of the Bodhnāth stūpa – he undertook a journey to Nepal together with his brother, he returned to Tibet by way of sKyid-grong and met up with sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po in Ri-bo dpal-'bar. There, together with the latter, he completed a "one-year retreat" (*lo mtshams*).[10]

8. See *Chos 'byung II*, p. 259.1, where it is said that he was born into a family of "local princes" (*sde dpon*) of Gram-so rdzong in the province of La-stod lHo. In a work of the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin (composed in 1680), he is called variously Drang-so gTer-ston Śākya bzang-po, rJe Drang-so ba, Drang-so sPrul-sku chen-po, or Drang-so sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po; see *rNam thar III*, pp. 316.6, 348.5, 350.4, 321.5 and *passim*. In the biography of the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku is found the episode in which the later reincarnation visits the homeland of his predecessor sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po; there mention is made of a lake (*drang so'i mtsho mo*) and the activities of his predecessor in the region (see note 35). The region of Gram-so/Drang-so under discussion here can be localized on maps; it lies east of Shel-dkar and contains a fairly large lake that flows into 'Phung-chu. Compare also the biography of Zhabs-dkar Tshogs-drug rang-grol (1781-1851), who, setting out from Shel-dkar in 1822, travelled to Sa-skya Monastery by way of the towns of mTsho-sgo and Drang-so: see *sNyigs dus 'gro ba yongs kyi skyabs mgon zhabs dkar rdo rje 'chang chen po'i rnam par thar pa rgyas par bshad pa (stod cha)*, Hsining: mTsho-sngon mi-rigs dpe-skrun khang, 1982, pp. 890.17-893.11, and M. Ricard, *The Life of Shabkar: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Yogin*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994, pp. 450-452. This was also the route taken by the Nepalese mission to Peking in the same year; see B. H. Hodgson, *Miscellaneous Essays relating to Indian Subjects*, London: Trübner & Co., 1880 (reprint: New Delhi / Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1992), vol. 2, p. 185: Dhángso.

9. Concerning his role as teacher of the Gung-thang prince see *gDung rabs I*, p. 137.15. For his stay in Glo-bo and for his teaching in bDe-grol Monastery in Byang Ngam-ring see *rNam thar III*, pp. 316.6, 321.5 and 358.5 ff. bDe-grol Monastery was the seat of Thugs-sras Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan (1454-1541); it is from him that the First Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku had received the teachings of Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can (1337-1406). For biographical data on Thugs-sras Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan see *Chos 'byung I*, p. 673.7-19.

10. For the first meeting see *rNam thar III*, p. 348.4-6. The pertinent passage reads: *kho rang gi rnam thar lung bstan mchod rten dmar po'i gter ma/ gsol 'debs le'u bdun sogs gsan/ rje drang so ba bal yul du mchod rten bya run kha shor gyi zhig gsos byon pa'i zhabs phyir 'byon bzhed kyang ma nus par phyir byon*. What is referred to as "his [i.e. sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po's] biography [and the] prophecies 'Treasure Work of the Red Stūpa'" is the text

The name Ri-bo dpal-'bar turns up again at the final meeting between master and disciple in the year 1527 at bDe-grol Monastery in Byang Ngam-ring. On this occasion Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje took an oath to maintain in their complete state the treasure teachings of the tradition of Ri-bo bkra-bzang and to follow the spiritual practice of those teachings in Ri-bo dpal-'bar for ten years. Even though shortly thereafter he freed himself from the terms of the vow in order to undertake another journey with his brother – this time to Central Tibet – it is nevertheless clear that the place called Ri-bo dpal-'bar played a pivotal role in the transmission of the Byang-gter teachings from sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po to Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje. This is not surprising in view of the fact that Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can, the founder of the tradition (he was born on the east side of the mountain Ri-bo bkra-bzang in La-stod Byang), was given possession of the region of Ri-bo dpal-'bar by the Gung-thang king Khri-rgyal bSod-nams lde (1371-1404), and there he rehid a portion of his treasure works for future generations.[11]

sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po passed his final years in the hidden valley of Yol-mo gangs-ra, where he died surrounded by his disciples. One of the historiographical works of the rNying-ma-pa school provides detailed information on the prophecies that the first Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku left on this occasion concerning the location of his rebirth. To his disciples he intimated that he would be born in the "lineage of the incarnation of the ruler" (*mnga' bdag pa'i sku brgyud*). As the work further makes clear, the "family line of the ruler" (*mnga' bdag pa'i gdung rigs*) refers to the descendants of treasure-discoverer Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1124-1192), who is regarded for his part as the incarnation of the "ruler" (*mnga' bdag*) Khri Srong-lde'u btsan. The disciples found the reincarnation of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, Nam-mkha' brgya-byin by name, among the family dGa'-thang nub-ma, one of the three subgroups of the above lineage; these are called *gDan sa smra bo cog po, dGa' thang pa shar ma, dGa" thang pa nub ma*. The family seat lay in the south-eastern province of lHo-brag, and the reincarnation belonged to the fourteenth generation following Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer.

2. Nam-mkha' brgya-byin (16th cent.)

Not much comprehensive information is available on the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin, but we can at least track down the names of several of his teachers and contemporaries. Thus it is stated that the ceremony of offering a lock of hair was carried out under one dPal 'Bri-gung-pa chen-po Ratnalakṣmi, who also on the occasion gave the young reincarnation the name Nam-mkha' brgya-byin. We can identify this teacher as the treasure-discoverer and master of the 'Bri-gung-pa school Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509-1557).

We learn further that the young reincarnation studied the method of teaching mantras according to the old school for the most part under Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje, and another source mentions him as the disciple of the treasure-discoverer Zhig-po gling-pa alias Rig-'dzin Gar-gyi dbang-phyug (1524-

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mChod rten chen po bya rung kha shor gyi lo rgyus thos pas grol ba mentioned in note 6. It was discovered by sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po in the red stūpa southwest of the main temple (*dbu rtse gtsug lag khang*) of bSam-yas.

11. Concerning their last meeting see *rNam thar III*, pp. 358.5-360.1. On the birthplace of Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can see P. Schwieger, "Zur Rezeptionsgeschichte des gSol 'debs le'u bdun ma und des gSol 'debs bsam pa lhun grub ma," *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 21, 1988 [1989], p. 33. The transfer of the property of Ri-bo dpal-'bar Monastery to Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can by Khri-rgyal bSod-nams lde is described in *gDung rabs I*, p. 119.15-16 (*mang yul ri bo dpal 'bar gyi dgon gnas gzhis bcas phul*); this occurred in 1389. It is stated further that the treasure-discoverer opened at this time the gate of the hidden valley of [bDe-ldan] sKyid-mo lung and again concealed there and in Ri-bo dpal-'bar treasure works for future recovery (*rig 'dzin chen pos sbas yul skyid mo lung gi sgo phyes/ dpal 'bar dang skyid mo lung du yang gter mang du sbas*). Concerning the hidden valley [bDe-ldan] sKyid-mo lung see the text cited in note 5. An inventory of the sacred mountain in the realm of the Gung-thang kings was filmed by the NGMPP under reel-no. L 290/14: *Mang yul gyi gnas chen ri bo dpal 'bar gyi dkar chag*, 27 fols.; according to the colophon, this text, after being written down, was hidden in rGyang[s] Yon-po lung; concerning this site associated with Padmasambhava see note 24.

1583).[12] Like his predecessor, Nam-mkha' brgya-byin undertook a renovation of the Bya-rung kha-shor stūpa in Nepal, and we find that he, too, was a spiritual preceptor at the royal court of Mang-yul Gung-thang. The name of the ruler at the time was Khri-rgyal bSod-nams dbang-phyug lde (1577-1627).[13]

Unfortunately no supplementary data concerning the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku's other activities are obtainable, so that I shall now confine myself to the more exact circumstances surrounding the end of his life and the preparations for the next incarnation. The second main figure in this context is a certain Lo-chen mchog-gi sPrul-sku, whom Nam-mkha' brgya-byin healed of a disease by performing on him certain rituals. At a later point in time he sent a message to the east, to Kong-po, written to this sPyan-ras-gzigs dbang Lo-chen along with a rustproof mirror for viewing certain portents of the next incarnation.

This person is in fact the father of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku; his full is name Rig-'dzin 'Phrin-las dbang-phyug, himself an incarnation of a "great translator" (*lo chen*) with the name Ratnabhadra. As chance would have it, we find the father again in another context, one leading us to the province of gTsang in the religiously and politically eventful period of the waning 16th century. There Rig-'dzin 'Phrin-las dbang-phyug is in the company of the young Jo-nang Tāranātha (1575-1635), who shortly before had met the Ninth Karma-pa dBang-phyug rdo-rje (1556-1603). Some time later Jo-nang Tāranātha mentions meeting the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku in person, at which time he asked him to confer a transmission for the practice of a special Guru Yoga.[14] This must have taken place shortly before the death of sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin, since soon thereafter Jo-nang Tāranātha notes the passing of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku along with the arrival of the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug (1584-1630), from whom he received the teachings of the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa school. Finally, mention is made of a "testament" (*zhal chems*) that the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku composed before his death.[15]

The political and religious climate under which we find the next rebirth, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, living is thus heralded. The impression that the observations just made would appear to force on us, namely,

12. See Khetsun Sangpo, *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism*, Vol. 4, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1973, pp. 220-222. The source for this brief biographical sketch of the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku is the text *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa* (see note 16). The mention of Rin-chen phun-tshogs together with Rigs-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje as the first teachers of the young incarnation points to the contact between the brothers mNga'-ris Paṇ-chen and mNga'-ris Rig-'dzin and the treasure finder of the 'Bri-gung-pa school. In the work of Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las, which reveals much concerning these connections, it is stated that the latter three persons jointly performed initiatory rituals in bSam-yas, as a result of which happiness and contentment prevailed in Tibet for thirteen years; see *rNam thar III*, p. 330.2-4 (*bsam yas su rje 'bri gung pa rin chen phun tshogs spyan drangs te/ mnga' ris paṇ di ta chen po mched gnyis dang/ chos rgyal 'bri gung pa rin chen phun tshogs te bla ma dam pa gsum gyis rab gnas mnga' gsol sogs rten 'brel mang du mdzas pas/ bod khams su lo bcu gsum gyi bar bde skyid 'byung ba'i rten 'brel 'grig*). On sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin's place in the tradition surrounding Zhig-po gling-pa see *Thob yig*, pp. 168-176; this latter treasure-discoveer has been known up to now primarily as the teacher of Sog bzlog-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1552-1624).

13. For the mention of Nam-mkha' brgya-byin at the court of the Gung-thang king see *gDung rabs I*, p. 143.14-15, where he is called Yol-mo sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya byin. This must have been at an quite early age of the ruler, since Khri-rgyal bSod-nams dbang-phyug lde relied in the latter part of his life on the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu as his spiritual preceptor; see *ibid.*, p. 143.17-18.

14. For a description of the contacts between the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku and the father of the next incarnation see Khetsun Sangpo (as in note 12), pp. 221-22; it should be noted that this report was from the perspective of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku. The source for the meeting between Jo-nang Tāranātha and the two protagonists is the latter's autobiography; see *Rtogs brjod I*, p. 53.6-7 & p. 135.7.

15. See *Rtogs brjod I*, pp. 138.5, 139.7. Concerning the person of Lo-chen Ratnabhadra, it may be noted that he is a teacher of the Jo-nang-pa school; see Ngag-dbang Blo-gros grags-pa (1920-1975), *dPal ldan jo nang pa'i chos 'byung rgyal ba'i chos tshul gsal byed zla ba'i sgron me*, Hsining: mTsho-sngon mi-rigs dpe-skrun khang, 1992, pp. 40.27-41.5. He founded the monastery Ri-bo gru-'dzin in the valley of gZhad, among others, and Jo-nang Kun-dga' grol-mchog (1507-1566) was one of his disciples. He is named along with Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje as a teacher of Byang-bdag Rigs-'dzin Chos-rgyal dbang-po'i sde (b. 1550); see *Chos 'byung I*, p. 557.3. For mention of a biography of Lo-chen mchog-gi sPrul-sku written by his son, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, see note 55.

that the teachings of the Jo-nang-pa and Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa schools had gained the upper hand in the province of gTsang at the end of the 16th century, should not detract from the fact that the rNying-ma-pa school continued to make its influence felt. The tensions between these various currents were given clear vent to in the life of the next incarnation.

3. bsTan-'dzin nor-bu / sTobs-ldan shugs-'chang rtsal (1598-1644)

Concerning the life and activities of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku four autobiographical writings are available, of which the "narrative" (*rtogs brjod*), written in 1632, contains the most detailed information on the birth and youth, education and travels as well as the spiritual practices and political activities of the reincarnation. In the following I shall be concerned only with information providing insight into the incarnational status of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, his teachers and his significance for the Byang-gter tradition. It may be hoped that the complete biography of this interesting figure from the 17th century will one day be published.[16]

Even though the birthplace of the new reincarnation lies in Kong-po, in eastern Tibet, his ties with the province of gTsang, in Central Tibet, are substantial. Thus it is stated that the ruler of the latter province, the sDe-srid gTsang-pa, made the son of Rig-'dzin 'Phrin-las dbang-phyug "partake of excellent provisions" (*mthun rkyen phun gsum tshogs pa gnang 'dug*). The area in and around the birthplace bears the name Klu-lnga, and from a travel report of a later author we know that it is located in the vicinity of the Bu-chu gser-kyi lha-khang; this is one of the four mTha'-'dul temples that go back to the time of Srong-btsan sgam-po.[17]

A separate chapter is devoted in the account to the procedure used for determining that the boy was the reincarnation of sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin; this takes us back to the first member and legitimating figure of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus: the helper during the construction of the Bodhnāth stūpa. Thus we find the following statement in connection with the preceding reincarnation, when the problem of determining the incarnational status became acute:

> In the testament of the preceding [incarnation] it is stated: "If the bodily sign [of carrying] loads during the existence as a helper is present, recognize his status, even if [the child] is mute. If it is not present, there is no need [to proceed further], even if he can express himself clearly."[18]

16. Concerning the autobiographical writings of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku see *Appendix I*. In the following I cite the text *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa* according to the second edition. The English introduction for the two-volume edition of the writings of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu mentions the existence of a biography; this datum is confirmed in the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma's biography of his teacher Zur Chos-dbyings rang-grol (1610-1657); see *rNam thar II*, fol. 107a/6 (... *rig 'dzin yol mo ba'i rnam thar*...). For the existence of the *bKa' 'bum* see note 55.

17. The ruler of gTsang is mentioned in *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, p. 104.6; he was probably Karma bsTan-bsrung dbang-po (who ruled up to 1611). The birthplace, Klu-lnga, is referred to in the biography of Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu, who paid a visit to it; see *rNam thar V*, p. 190.3-4 (*lha ri seng ge'i zhol gu ru chen po'i sgrub phug tu te zhig bzhugs/ de'i mdun klu lnga zhes rig 'dzin yol mo ba bstan 'dzin nor bu sku mched sku bltams pa'i yul du bzhugs*...). The "brother" (*sku mched*) of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu adverted to here bears the name Phyag-rdor nor-bu (concerning whom see note 19). The cave of Padmasambhava and the birthplaces of the two brothers is mentioned directly after the account of Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu's sojourn in Bu-chu gser-kyi lha-khang; for the latter temple as a source for treasure works of the rNying-ma-pa school in the 17th century see F.-K. Ehrhard, "The Role of 'Treasure Discoverers' and Their Writings in the Search for Himalayan Sacred Lands", in Toni Huber, ed., *Sacred Spaces and Powerful Places in Tibetan Culture*, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1999, p. 232.

18. See *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, p. 106.2-3 (*gong ma'i bka' chems las/ bran du skyes dus kyi sgal pa'i sha rtags pa 'di 'dug na lkug par 'dug kyang bdag rkyen brgyi/ 'di mi 'dug na kha gsal yang byed mi dgos gsungs pa*...) See the paraphrase in *Chos 'byung I*, p. 563.1-3: "In accordance with the words of the earlier reincarnation: "If the scar [from carrying] the loads during construction of the Bya-rung kha-shor stūpa in his existence as helper to the woman goose-keeper is present, recognize his status." When the articles of clothing were removed and [the body] exposed to eyesight, the scar [from carrying] loads could be seen, and still other [methods of] identifying [the reincarnation] were employed a number of times." (... *sku gong ma'i gsung las/ mchod rten bya rung kha shor bzhengs dus/ bya rdzi'i bran du skyes dus kyi sgal mig 'di yod na bdag rkyen gyis/ gsung pa yod 'dug bzhin/ na bza'*

Given the presence of these visible body signs, the status of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu as incarnation of the helper at the construction of the Bodhnāth stūpa – and by implication also that of the minister Padma Gung-btsan as well as the First and Second Yol-mo-ba sprul-skus – was cleared up. As can be read in two of the four other autobiographical writings, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku was creatively caught up in the incarnational chain he embodied, not only devoting to it a prose account furnished with pictures – bearing the title *rTogs brjod mkhas pa'i rna rgyan* – but also commemorating each of the individual links of the chain with a poem that stated the birthplace and recapitulated details of the incarnation; this work bears the title "Praise in the Form of a Thread of the Line of Rebirths" (*skyes rabs kyi 'phreng bar bstod pa*).

This latter document, important for the lineage's understanding of itself and for its attempt to gain public recognition, does not, in its presentation of the earlier incarnations, stop with the helper during the building of the stūpa and the minister Padma Gung-btsan; other figures are also added, localizing the spiritual activities of the lineage within the real geography and the otherworldly realms compatible with the world view of a 17th century Tibetan Buddhist. As is learned from the colophon of the text in question, bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, when producing the rebirth sequence, let himself be guided by sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin's data, so that we can get a good idea, from this example, of how the individual representatives of the incarnational lineage went about establishing and cementing their claim to spiritual powers.

Let us now proceed with the education of the young Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku and his different teachers. Soon after the death of his father we find him in Central Tibet, in Myang, where for the first time he met with the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug. Under the latter he took the upāsaka vows and received the name Karma Thub-bstan snying-po rnam-par rgyal-ba (his full ordination as a bhikṣu would also take place later under the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa). In Ngam-ring, in La-stod Byang – a place familiar in connection with the activities of the First Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku – the first person he met was Lo-chen 'Gyur-med bde-chen (1540-1615), a descendant of Thang-stong rgyal-po (1361-1485) and author of the well-known biography of this siddha. According to the illustrations of the life of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu (see *Appendix I*), it was primarily the teachings of the Ṣaḍaṅgayoga of the Kālacakra that he studied on a later occasion in gCung Ri-bo-che under Lo-chen 'Gyur-med bde-chen.[19]

Before I take up the next teacher, the young incarnation's visit to the Kaṭhmandu Valley must be mentioned. This occurred sometime in the years between 1614 and 1617 at the invitation of the Malla king Shivasiṃha, who ruled in Kathmandu from 1578 to 1619, and also in Patan from 1598 to 1619. bsTan-'dzin nor-bu performed a "great public consecration" (*khrom dbang chen po*) in front of the king's palace, and a dialogue carried on with the aid of an interpreter has come down to us. He visited, furthermore, the Svayambhūnāth stūpa and other Buddhist shrines of the Valley. A separate chapter of the autobiography provides information on the activities at the sacred site of Bya-rung kha-shor:

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phud nas/ ltas pas/ sgal mig kyang gsal bar mthong zhing/ ngos 'dzin gzhang yang mang du mdzad). For the inspection of bodily signs as confirmation of the incarnational status of the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku see note 40.

19. See *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, pp. 112.6-114.1, concerning the upāsaka vows under the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa, and *ibid.*, pp. 114.1-116.5, concerning the meeting with Lo-chen 'Gyur-med bde-chen; for a meeting with this teacher from the perspective of Jo-nang Tāranātha, see *Rtogs brjod I*, p. 152.2-4. Some interesting facts concerning the Ri-bo-che Monastery are found in *Chos 'byung I*, p. 664.9-12: "gCung Ri-bo-che was first built by the mahāsiddha Thang-stong rgyal-po; subsequently it was maintained by a series of successors in the family line. Lo-chen 'Gyur-med bde-chen, who was one of them, offered [the monastery] to the Yol-mo gter-ston bsTan-'dzin nor-bu; later sGom-smyon Phyag-rdor nor-bu, the treasure-discoverer's younger brother, and the series of the incarnations of sGom-smyon, made it their residence." (*gcung ri bo che ni/ thog mar grub chen thang stong rgyal pos btab/ de nas dbon rgyud kyi rim par bskyangs pa las/ lo chen 'gyur med bde chen gyis yol mo gter ston bstan 'dzin nor bur phul nas/ gter ston gcung sgom smyon phyag rdor nor bu dang/ sgom smyon sprul sku rim byon gyis gdan sa mdzad*). In the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, this Phyag-rdor nor-bu is mentioned several times (with the spelling sGam-smyon sPrul-sku), and the year of his death can be determined to be 1658; see *Rtogs brjod II*, pp. 698.19-699.4. A text by the younger brother of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku was filmed by the NGMPP under reel-no. AT 82/12: *rDo rje phur pa'i dbang bshad thos pa don ldan*, 10 fols.

> Afterwards Mahāraja Shivasiṃha acted in that realm as the 'donor' (*dānapāti*), [and] that temple was built for service at [Bya-rung] kha-shor. I arrived [there] for the 'earth ritual.' ... On the very day on which the consecration of this large, self-manifested stūpa was renewed, a great shower of flowers occurred.[20]

The young incarnation returned to the province of gTsang via Yol-mo and Mang-yul Gung-thang, where he stayed at the court of Khri-rgyal bSod-nams dbang-phyug lde; soon afterwards he met the gTsang sDe-srid Karma Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal (ruled 1611-1621) in the fortress of bSam-grub rtse. During the following period in Central Tibet bsTan-'dzin nor-bu continued to be busy with his studies, which he also pursued in, among other places, Nyin-byed gling and in the monastery dGa'-ldan Byams-pa gling in Ngam-ring.

At the age of 19, that is, in 1617, the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku came into contact with the teacher who reacquainted him with the spiritual practices of the rNying-ma-pa school, and above all with the rituals of the Byang-gter tradition: Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po (1580-1639), who, as the incarnation of the above-mentioned mNga'-ris Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje, had been educated by his father, Byang-bdag Rigs-'dzin dBang-po'i sde. We know that on a total of four occasions a wealth of treasure teachings was passed on to bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, among which the cycle *Byang gter thugs sgrub rnam gsum* stands out; according to one source, bsTan-'dzin nor-bu was named a spiritual "representative" (*rgyal tshab*) by Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po.[21] That this transfer of the teachings did not proceed without its problems at the beginning is seen in a revealing description by the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho:

> Only a short period having passed after the return of the precious rebirth [i.e. the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku] from Nyin-byed gling, fear arose over the consumption [of the ingredients] of the *Gaṇacakra* because of the [previously obtained spiritual] experience during debating, and manifold erroneous ideas came up, [in particular] the thought that the multitude of ritual acts for subduing worldly gods obviously only harm living beings. At this point the *Mahāvidyādhāra* [i.e. Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po] focussed his directly staring gaze upon the rebirth, and with the words "Since there are so many cycles here in the old school of hidden mantras [for practising] violent activity – the 'rites of submission' (*abhicara*) – are you not ashamed?" envy in the form of a logician's arrogance and dismissal dissolved itself into a subdued object. By virtue of the fact

20. *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, p. 136.4-5 (*de nas yul der si hu sing ma hā rā jas sbyin bdag mdzad/ kha shor zhabs drung gi dgon pa 'di thebs pa yin/ de'i sa chog la phyin/ ... rang byung gi mchod rten chen po de nyis [nyid] la rab gnas gsos pa'i nyin kyang me tog gi char chen po*). See also the summary of the entire section in *Chos 'byung I*, pp. 563.23-564.1: "The accommodations for the caretaker were newly built next to the great stūpa Bya-rung kha-shor; at this point he made a threatening gesture in the direction of an opening in the rock, and since he said, "If water could come out of it," there later arose there a fresh spring. While he was carrying out the consecration at the stūpa, a rain of flowers fell; the wishes that were made [on this occasion] were immediately fulfilled, it is said" (*mchod rten chen po bya rung kha shor 'gran gyi dkon gnyer sdod sa gsar du btab/ de'i tshe gad pa gcig la phyag mdzub btsugs te/ 'di nas chu ci byung na gsungs pas slar de nas chu mig dkar mo byung/ mchod rten la rab gnas mdzad pas/ me tog gi char babs/ smon lam 'debs par mdzad pa rnams kyang 'phral du 'grub par byung gsungs*). Some years later the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug followed the steps of his disciple to the Kathmandu Valley – and to Helambu – and met the next generation of Malla kings; see F.-K. Ehrhard, "'The Lands Are like a Wiped Golden Basin': The Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa's Journey to Nepal and his Travelogue (1629/30)", in Samten G. Karmay, ed., *Les Habitants du toit du Monde: Études recueillies en homage à Alexander W. Macdonald*, Nanterre: Société d'Ethnologie (Recherches sur la Haute Asie, 12), 1997, pp. 126-132.

21. See *Chos 'byung II*, p. 280.1-2 (*yol mo ba gsum pa bstan 'dzin nor bu snga phyi lan bzhi'i bar du sku drung du phebs par byang gter gtso bor gyur pa'i gter chos zab mo bum pa gang bya'i tshul du rtsal [= bstsal] te nyid kyi rgyal tshab tu mnga' gsol mdzad*). Concerning the genealogy of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po, it may be noted that his father numbered among the last representatives of the royal house of La-stod Byang, while his mother belonged to the nobility of 'Phyong-rgyas, the "royal family of Za-hor" (*za hor gyi rgyal rigs*); *ibid.* p. 277.4. The Fifth Dalai Bla-ma Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho also came from the latter family; the autobiography mentions the presence of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po shortly after the birth of Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho in the year 1617; see *Rtogs brjod II*, p. 44.5-7.

> that a trust was born from within that no longer differentiated between teacher and the teaching, a state was reached in which he was purified into a *mantradhara* of the old school.[22]

Detailing the further activities of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, as a representative of the rNying-ma-pa school, would lead us too far afield. He did, in any case, do justice to his role as lineage-holder of the Byang-gter tradition; an exact analysis of the works of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, for example, might shed some light on his spiritual and political services during a trying period for the newly established Tibetan government. We know already at least that, long before his trip to the court of the first Manchu emperor, the young Dalai Bla-ma sought out the advice of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku on that matter, and a personal meeting between Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho and bsTan-'dzin nor-bu is likewise documented for the year 1643.[23]

The only thing that needs to be focussed on in the following is the importance of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku as a treasure-discoverer, in which capacity he visited the old haunts of the sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po. We find him during his first large retreat, which is devoted to the cycles of the *Byang gter thugs sgrub rnam gsum*, in a place frequented a century earlier by the First Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, namely, Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar. The name sTobs-ldan shugs-'chang rtsal was given to him by a ḍākinī in a dream, along with a "scroll" (*shog dril*). Finally, several years later, in rGyang[s] Yon-po lung in the province of gTsang, he brought to light "introductory lists" (*kha byang*) and a treasure cycle dedicated to Padmasambhava in his outer form as rDo-rje gro-lod, being assisted in this by his teacher Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po. In this cycle were found prophecies that not only concerned the number of rebirths of the minister Padma Gung-btsan but also pertained to the younger brother sPrul-sku Phyag-rdor nor-bu and the person of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma. These identifications were made by Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po.[24]

On this occasion, too, a portion of text was recovered that again refers to Ri-bo dpal-'bar and to a treasure that remained there to be discovered. The find, prophesied for the year 1639, did not occur in spite of preparations that began already in 1638; the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma cites the death of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi

22. See *rNam thar I*, p. 516.1-3 (*sprul sku rin po che nyin byed gling nas phyir byon te ring por ma long pas/ rtog ge ba'i nyams kyis tshogs 'khor gsol ba la 'tsher snang dang/ dregs 'dul gyi las tshogs la sems can la gnod pa byed pa 'ba' zhig tu 'dug dgongs pa'i log rtog sna tshogs shar ba na/ rig 'dzin chen pos sprul pa'i sku la spyan gcer gyi gzigs nas/ gsang sngags rnying ma 'di la drag po mngon spyod kyi skor mangs bas thugs khrel yod dam gsung ba na/ mtshan nyid pa'i khyad gsod dang nga rgyal gyi ham thul yul bud de/ bla ma dang chos la mi phyed pa'i mos pa gting nas 'khrungs pas rnying ma ba'i sngags 'chang du gtsang sing gi song go*). The passage was borrowed by *Chos 'byung I*, p. 564.13-19. The composition of the biography of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po by the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma occurred in the year 1654; visionary meetings with Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje, who urged the 37-year-old Dalai Bla-ma to disseminate his treasure cycles, are on record as having taken place in that very year. See Samten G. Karmay, *Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama: The Golden Manuscript of the Fournier Collection*, London: Serindia Publications, 1988, p. 37.
23. Concerning the Third Yol-mo-ba's reaction to the doubts of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma as to whether he should accept the invitation to the court of the Manchu emperor, see Samten G. Karmay, "The Gold Seal: The Fifth Dalai Lama and Emperor Shun-chih", in *The Arrow and the Spindle: Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998, p. 518; the written source for this is *Rtogs brjod II*, p. 242.6-10. A face-to-face meeting with the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku is recorded shortly before this in the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma; see *ibid.*, p. 236.3-18. Also recorded is a vision of Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho in which Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po was flanked by his two disciples, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku and Zur Chos-dbyings rang-grol; see Karmay (as in note 22) p. 217-4 (in the résumé of the text portion – *ibid.*, p. 67 – bsTan-'dzin phrin-las should be emended to bsTan-'dzin nor-bu).
24. This is a brief summary of *rNam thar I*, pp. 542.6-545.1, reproduced in *Chos 'byung I*, pp. 564.19-565.18. rGyang[s] Yon-po lung is known as a meditation grotto in the vicinity of Grom-pa rGyang[s], one of the four Ru-gnon temples from the time of Srong-btsan sgam-po. Treasure works of the cycle *Le'u bdun ma* had been recovered there as early as 1362 by the hermit bZang-po grags-pa, who passed them on to Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can; concerning this find, which contained texts intended specifically for the kings of Mang-yul Gung-thang, see Schwieger (as in note 11), pp. 30 ff. The sojourn of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku in rGyang[s] Yon-po lung is described in detail in *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, pp. 190.1-200.5.

dbang-po as the reason for this, since it caused bsTan-'dzin nor-bu to proceed to Central Tibet and not to the sacred site in Mang-yul Gung-thang.[25] During this time bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, like the First and Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus previously, had connections with the royal court of Mang-yul Gung-thang, which was undergoing a decline in the wake of the wars between gTsang and dBus. The following citation shows that these links with the old royal line was very close:

> The chief consort of Khri bSod-nams dbang-phyug lde bore only a daughter but no sons. This daughter, [called] lHa-gcig, later became the companion of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu. To her [in turn] a daughter was born, with the signs of a ḍākinī, bearing the name Nor-'dzin dbang-mo and known as the reincarnation of Ma-cig Rwa-ma. It is said that, at the age of 25, she entered the City of Heavenly Wanderers to the accompaniment of numerous omens.[26]

bsTan-'dzin nor-bu's daughter will cross our path again in connection with the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku. It may be merely pointed out in conclusion that, according to information supplied by Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu, the royal family of Mang-yul Gung-thang came to an end with her, an event that is intimately connected with the break-up of another – if rather short-lived – ruling family, the lords of gTsang. As we have seen, bsTan-'dzin nor-bu had contacts with representatives of this family, and the name of the final ruler, Karma bsTan-skyong dbang-po (ruled 1621-1642), likewise occurs in several places in his autobiography.

It would take us too far afield to go into these connections between the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku and the ruling families of Mang-yul Gung-thang and gTsang in detail. He had, in any case, a not inappreciable role to play during this period of political upheaval in Tibet, which brought in its wake, by laying the foundations for it, the primacy of the dGa'-ldan Pho-brang government. We know, for instance, that the gTsang-pa mahārāja, Karma bsTan-skyong dbang-po, sent him to the fortress of Shel-dkar in the province of lHa-stod lHo, where he carried out "rituals for the repulse of the Mongolian [armies]" (*sog bzlog gi sku rim*). Further, his relations with the Sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug continued, and also with the Tenth Karma-pa Chos-dbyings rdo-rje (1604-1674); in the company of the latter, for example, he tarried at La-phyi Chu-dbar on the border of Nepal.[27] Similarly, his contacts with representatives of the rNying-ma-pa

25. See *rNam thar I*, p. 545.1-5. In the biography of Zur Chos-dbyings rang-grol, written by the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, this thwarted treasure find is described and interpreted politically; see *rNam thar II*, p. 125-4-6. There is a late echo of political significance to this affair in prophecies that Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu revealed to the ruler Pho-lha bSod-nams stobs-rgyas (1689-1747); see *rNam thar V*, p. 173.2-3: "If the rebirth of [the minister Padma] Gung-btsan raises the treasure of [Mang-yul Ri-bo] dpal-'bar, joy [will reign in Tibet] for 25 years, it is said." (*gung btsan sprul pas dpal 'bar gter/ thon na nyer lnga bde bar gsungs*). It ought to be recalled that Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu also intended to raise the treasure of Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar but likewise was kept from doing so by unfavourable circumstances; see Pieter Schwieger, *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke,* Vol. 10, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, XI/10), 1990, pp. 88-89.

26. See *gDung rabs I*, p. 144.8-14 (*khri bsod nams dbang phyug lde'i btsun mo dngos la sras mo gcig las sras ma byung zhing/ sras mo lha gcig de phyis yol mo sprul sku bstan 'dzin nor bu'i rigs mar gyur/ de la sras mo ma cig rwa ma'i sprul par grags pa nor 'dzin dbang mo zhes mkha' gro'i ['gro'i] mtshan dang ldan pa zhig byung ba ngo mtshar gyi ltas du ma dang bcas dgung lo nyer lnga'i skabs mkha' la spyod pa'i grong khyer du gshegs zhes zer*). This is summarized in *Chos 'byung II*, p. 265.1-2 in the following words: "He took as a secret partner the daughter of the king of Gung-thang, [of] the family line of the Mahāsammata [kings], bSod-nams dbang-phyug [by name]; she possessed the signs of a ḍākinī" (*mang bkur gdung rabs gung thang rgyal po bsod nams dbang phyug gi sras mo mkha' 'gro'i mtshan rtags ldan pa gsang yum du bzhes*). Another example from the 15th century shows that it was not uncustomary for a princess of Mang-yul Gung-thang to be given to influential Buddhist yogins; during this time we find the princess Chos-kyi sgron-me, the daughter of Khri lHa-dbang rgyal-mtshan (1404-1464), as the partner of Bo-dong Paṇ-chen Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal (1375-1451); her rebirths attained fame as the Yar-'brog rJe btsun-mas, who presided over bSam-sding Monastery in Yar-'brog. See, for example, *gDung rabs I*, pp. 124.21-125.4. For a detailed description of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu's relation with his consort and daughter see *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, pp. 200.5-208.6, 232.1-245.5.

27. On his sojourn in Shel-dkar rdzong see *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, pp. 232.1 ff.; the temple of La-phyi Chu-dbar is first mentioned *ibid.*, p. 204.1, and the common sojourn with the Tenth Karma-pa is found *ibid.*, pp. 227.3 ff. The

school expanded, particularly those residing in the "regions of the gorges" (*rong phyogs*); we find the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, for example, after a further visit to Shel-dkar – arranged again by the ruler of gTsang – turning up in the valley of [b]Tsum, which today is located on Nepalese territory, this time at the invitation of a certain sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' seng-ge; in Byams-pa sprin, the old mTha'-'dul temple in the sKyid-grong valley, he was engaged in renovation works financed by, among others, one sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' kun-bzang.[28]

His greatest act of service to the school of the rNying-ma-pa, however, has to do with the phenomenon of conscious rebirth. Detailed accounts by the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma have been handed down of how, at the instigation of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku "took upon himself the burden of the residence" (*gdan sa'i khur bzhes*) after the death of his teacher – looking after, in other words, rDo-rje brag Monastery in Central Tibet – and at the same time determining the next rebirth of his teacher, the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las. He still had time to carry out the investiture of the young rebirth before leaving the mortal plane soon thereafter.[29]

The continuity of the incarnations of the founder of the Byang-gter lineage was thus guaranteed. As for the extension of his own lineage, that of the helper during construction of the Bya-rung Kha-shor stūpa, there were obviously no detailed preparations made for the next incarnation such as could be observed for the first two Yol-mo-ba Sprul-skus. In the following we shall see that a new rebirth satisfying the required conditions did, nevertheless, appear. Concerning bsTan-'dzin nor-bu's literary production aimed at consolidating lines of rebirths, it may be said, finally, that they cover in similar fashion the lineage of his teacher and also his own.[30] Did he perhaps slacken his efforts on behalf of the next Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku in order to discover the rebirth of his teacher?

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monastery of Chu-dbar was originally under the control of the Phag-mo gru rulers; later it came into the possession of the Zhwa-dmar-pa incarnations and finally was handed over by the Sixth Zhwa dmar-pa to the Tenth Karma-pa. See E. De Rossi Filibeck, *Two Tibetan Guide Books to Ti se and La phyi*, Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag (Monumenta Tibetica Historica, 1, 4), 1988, pp. 159-160.

28. The invitation to visit [b]Tsum is described in *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, pp. 240.6-241.1. sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' seng-ge was a member of the family mDo-bo-che which kept up the teachings of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud-pa school of the same name; he received teachings from, among others, the Second and Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus. See *Thob yig*, pp. 168.1-172.5, 131.1-138.3 (the cycle *Byang gter thugs sgrub rnam gsum*). Concerning the activities in Byams-pa sprin and the person of sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' kun-bzang see *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, p. 242.4. The latter is a grandson of the treasure-discoverer Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa (1480-1535). See also note 44.

29. See *rNam thar I*, pp. 546.5-550.4, and *rNam thar II*, p. 124.4 ff., where the arrival of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku at rDo-rje brag Monastery and the immediate circumstances surrounding the discovery of the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin, along with the death of the Third Yol-mo-ba, are described from the perspective of Zur Chos-dbyings rang-grol. Mention is made of a protracted illness that bsTan-'dzin nor-bu fell victim to during his trip to Nepal; see fol. 71a/6 (*rigs 'dzin yol mo ba sngar yam bu rgyal pos gdan drangs dus bal tshad kyi snyun ro yod pa...*). In *Chos 'byung I*, p. 566.2-3, his relatively early death is explained in the following words: "As he was not able to uncover the later profound treasure, the fault being that the favourable link broke, it is as if, to all appearances, his term of life, too, was not fulfilled" (*de yang zab gter phyi ma bzhes pa ma grub pas rten 'brel 'chug pa'i skyon gyis sku tshe'ang tshad du 'khyol ba ma byung bar snang ngo*). This refers to the thwarted treasure find at Ri-bo dpal-'bar; see note 25.

30. In the colophon of *rNam thar I*, p. 552.5, the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma mentions a work of Rig-'dzin Yol-mo-ba along with a text of his brother Rig-'dzin Phyag-rdor nor-bu as two of his main literary sources. The biography itself, in structural terms, draws on the verses of the work of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu; in the introduction (p. 429.5) it bears the title *sKyes rabs kyi phreng ba sum cu rtsa gsum gyi gsol 'debs tshigs su bcad pa dri med pad dkar bzhad pa'i 'phreng ba*. See also the text *sKyes rabs kyi 'phreng ba bstod pa pad dkar brgyan 'phreng ba*, translated in Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Philip Pierce & Christoph Cüppers, *Views of the Bodhnāth-Stūpa*, Kathmandu: Eigenverlag (privately published), 1991, pp. 18-26.

4. Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje (1647-1716)

A collection of the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku's autobiographical writings has been preserved that provides insight into his personality and his activities in the Tibeto-Nepalese border region; the collection comprises an "external biography" (*phyi'i rnam thar*), three "internal biographies" (*nang gi rnam thar*) and one "secret biography" (*gsang ba'i rnam thar*). The availability of quite a great number of manuscript versions of this collection shows the popularity of this representative of the incarnation lineage (see *Appendix I* and *II*).

In the English preface to one of the editions, Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje is characterized as "one of the outstanding tantric masters of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition during the 17th century. He had strong karmic links with Nepal where he had taken a number of previous embodiments." His relationship to the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku is summarized in the words: "His chief master in his youth was Yol-mo-ba bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, the regent of rDo-rje brag."[31] This statement is based on a rather cursory reading of the introductory folios of the *Phyi'i rnam thar*; in the following I shall look into the passage more carefully and shall attempt to clarify the incarnational status of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje.

The name Yol-mo-ba bsTan-'dzin nor-bu occurs in the introductory folios in connection with the father of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje; from the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku the latter had received the name Rigs-'dzin sTobs-ldan dbang-po 'chi-med rgya-mtsho'i sde and was further recognized by him as the incarnation of a series of Buddhist masters. The lineage begins with the Bodhisattva lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje.[32] It is stated further that the father resided in the monastery rGyal-gling in gTsang during the time when the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku was fulfilling the duties of resident in rDo-rje brag – that is, after the death of Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po in 1639. During this period the father addressed a "detailed petition" (*zhu ba'i 'phrin rgyas par*) to his teacher and sent it to the province of dBus, that is, to rDo-rje brag. The reply from the pen of the bsTan-'dzin nor-bu is cited in full in the autobiography, and in comment upon it it is stated:

> In accordance with the permission granted, the father was named to be the representative of the great stūpa Bya-rung kha-shor in Nepal; having been appointed, [moreover,] overseer of all monasteries of the nine valleys, he moved to the great stūpa [Bya-rung] kha-shor.[33]

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31. Preface to the first edition; see *Appendix I*. This preface was incorporated into the second edition, published in the same year; the latter manuscript derives from the library of H. H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. In the following I use only the *Phyi'i rnam thar* and cite it according to the first edition, supplementing readings on the basis of NGMPP reel no. E 2676/4.

32. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 5.1-6.1. lHa-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje likewise plays a role in the myth of the Bodhnāth stūpa. According to the inventory of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po an elephant that was put to work during the construction of the edifice utters the negative wish to be born as King Glang Dar-ma and to suppress Buddhist teaching; thereupon a raven that happens to have been present expresses the desire to be allowed to kill the anti-Buddhist king in his next rebirth. This is the monk dPal-gyi rdo-rje of lHa-lung; see the block print of *mChod rten chen po bya rung kha shor gyi lo rgyus thos pas grol ba* (as in note 6), fol. 7b/4-6. For a historical interpretation of the attacks of Glang Dar-ma against the first monastery foundings in Tibet and his assassination in 842 by lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje, the ninth abbot of bSam-yas, see S. G. Karmay (as in note 3), pp. 8-9 & 78. Concerning the incarnational status of the father see *Thob yig*, p. 539: *lha lung dpal gyi rdo rje nyid/ bsam bzhin sprul pa'i skur byon pa/ rig 'dzin 'chi med rgya mtsho las/ zab gter chos kyi thob yig yod*. These are the formulations of an important member of the mDo-bo-che family, who was a disciple of Rig-'dzin sTobs-ldan dpa'-bo; concerning this person see note 39.

33. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, p. 10.2-3 (*zhes gnang ba stsal pa ltar/ pha de nyid la mchod rten chen po bya rung kha shor gyis [gyi] gnas 'dzin gtsos [bcol] rong khag dgu'i dgon gnas rnams kyi bdag por bdod nas/ kha shor mchod rten chen po'i drung du phebs pa*). The "nine valleys" refer to the region between the Triśūlī Khola and the Bhote Kosi. The administering of the monasteries by an incarnation of lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje may later have led the local lineage of descent to appropriate the name. See Graham E. Clarke (as in note 4) p. 7: "... and the priestly lineage of Melemchi was once (it is claimed) Lhalung (t. *lha-lung*) which connects it to the Nyingmapa lineage." Concerning the dispersion of the lineage along the upper reaches of Melemchi Khola and Balephi Khola compare also G. E. Clarke, "A Malla Copper-Plate from Sindhu-Palchok," *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, 8 (1988), p. 108: "Tamang of the Lhalung Lineage." For a parallel presence of a lineage that claims to go back to lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje, in the upper reaches of the Bemdang Khola, see Corneille Jest, "Report on the Monuments of Northern

Faithful to the prophecies of his teacher, Rig-'dzin sTobs-ldan dbang-po took a consort and went about his duties as representative at the Bodhnāth stūpa; at one point bad omens and dreams occurred – among other things, the whole edifice leaned to the north – and soon thereafter a courier arrived with the news that the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku had passed away; he also bore a letter from sPrul-sku Phyag-rdor nor-bu, the deceased's brother.

There follow descriptions of the dreams that his father and mother had and a trip the parents undertook to La-stod Drang-so, the birthplace of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po. The monastery rGyal-gling in gTsang is again mentioned, where, on the full moon day of the first Tibetan month of 1647, the new rebirth of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku came into the world, attended by miraculous signs.[34] The next place named is again La-stod Drang-so, where the boy was required for the first time to put his incarnational status to the test by controlling a natural event: he and his retinue came upon an "overflowing lake" (*mtsho mo lud pa*), and the inhabitants of the region asked him for a "means to counteract" (*bzlog thabs*) the outpour of water. The name of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po was brought up, along with the fact that "the local demons had been put under oath" (*yul 'di'i 'dre srin rnams dam la btags pa yin*) at one time by him. In accordance with a prophecy that the lake should be circumambulated, the child was put on the back of one of his retinue, and after the prescribed circumambulation the lake returned to normal.[35]

In order to succeed to bsTan-'dzin nor-bu's office, he afterwards went to the scene of the latter's activities, namely the site of dNgos-grub mtsho-gling in Mang-yul sKyid-grong. In 1651, when the young reincarnation was now four years old, the political situation in this valley situated on the border between Nepal and Tibet was unfortunately not very peaceful, so that he took up an invitation from the inhabitants of 'Gyes-phug; he was given charge of Sa-sprin Monastery and settled down in it with his family.[36]

Next the biography describes the process by which the status of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the rebirth of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu is tested: the "questioning by means of lots" (*brtag pa sgril ba*), carried out in two different places. First, his father met with rGyal-sras Phyag-rdor nor-bu, the brother of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, and other priests in Pha-drug Chos-bskor sgang, south of Shel-dkar rDzong. One sGam-po sPrul-sku is specifically named as being among them; this sGam-po sPrul-sku was in possession of one of the "five treasures that represent the body [of Padmasambhava]" (*sku tshab gter lnga*). The lot was cast in the presence of these sacred objects, which bore the name *sku tshab padma bdud 'dul*, and the answer was positive. The procedure was repeated in front of the statue of the Ārya Wa-ti bzang-po in sKyid-grong, the so-called "Lord of sKyid-grong" (*skyid grong jo bo*), but Phyag-rdor nor-bu and the rebirth's father were not

Nepal: Monuments of Rasuwa District," *Ancient Nepal: Journal of the Department of Archaeology*, 85 (1984/1985), p. 20.

34. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, p. 10.3-15.4. I am here attempting to reproduce the flow of narrative in its rough features. A complete and annotated translation of this interesting text would be a rewarding undertaking, particularly in view of the still rather poorly documented background to the reorganization of relations between Kathmandu and Tibet instituted under the Malla king Pratāpa Malla (1641-1674); on this subject see, for example, M. Slusser, *Nepal Maṇḍala: A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley*, Vol. 1, Princeton: Princeton Uiversity Press, 1982, pp. 70, 277.

35. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 15.4-16.3. This episode is not based on personal recollection; Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal learned of it later from one of his followers. On the area of Drang-so in La-stod lHo as the homeland of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, see note 8.

36. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 16.3-17.1. Concerning the situation in sKyid-grong it is stated: "At the time the eastern bank of the sKyid-grong River was in the possession of the king of Kathmandu, the three [tracts of land] 'Cang, Sher and Dol in the possession of the king of Gorkha, and [the village of] Rag-ma in the possession of the genuine king of Tibet and so forth. Thus people here in Mang-yul devoted themselves totally to strife, [as is customary of] bad times" (*de skabs skyid grong chu shar rgyud rnams yam bu rgyal'i [pos] bzung/ 'cang sher dol gsum gor kha rgyal po'i [pos] bzung/ rag ma bod rgyal po gtsang bas bzung ba sogs/ mang yul 'dir dus zir [zing] thab ['thab] brtsod [rtsod] kho na byed pa la*). The expression "genuine king of Tibet" must refer to the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, who in 1642, with the end of the gTsang rulers, assumed the reins of power in Tibet. Of interest in this citation is the presence, in the middle of the 17th century, of Gorkha alongside the kingdom of Kathmandu on the trade route to Tibet. Concerning the site called [dKar-ye] dNgos-grub mtsho-gling see note 51.

personally present on this occasion. Again the decision fell in favour of the young boy. Although objects from the treasure of rGyang[s] Yon-po lung – including four written scrolls – were thereupon handed over to the father as signs of the incarnational status of his son, certain conditions later failed to be met, so that the recognition extended to the son left something to be desired, with some people harbouring doubts concerning his role as a rebirth.[37]

What was the cause of this doubt surrounding the status of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, which repeatedly surfaced in spite of all proof to the contrary– According to my observations, the sources cite two reasons: First, his role as a priest of the rNying-ma-pa school was already legitimated by his status as an offspring of Rig-'dzin sTobs-ldan dbang-po. Thus, in a personal meeting with the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, he is called merely "the son" (*sras*); the same term is found in an official document from the year 1676, likewise from the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, confirming Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the resident at the Bodhnāth stūpa.[38] A further piece of evidence for this is a passage in the biography which describes a meeting between Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje and mDo-chen-pa Nor-bu bde-chen (b. 1617) in La-ldebs, a high mountain valley south-east of sKyid-grong. This latter teacher, who studied directly under the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, refused to take part in a consecration that Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje performed for the local populace; the following reason has come down:

> Nor-bu bde-chen spoke: "Now I won't come." The one in attendance [called] 'Jigs[-med] grags[-pa] [spoke up for his part]: "It's all the same whether you are the reincarnation of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu or not. It's enough that you are the son of [Rig-'dzin] sTobs-ldan dbang-po."[39]

A second, related reason was certain remarks by the previous incarnation that probably always stood in the way of official recognition for Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje. This was made clear during a meeting with the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku's daughter, who brought up the following points made by her father concerning a possible rebirth:

> [Some time] after the notion arose to go to the region of La-stod, we, master and disciples, arrived at Drang-so dGa'-ldan. The daughter of the former incarnation was staying there, Chos-'dzin by name, the wife of Drang-so dGa'-ldan-pa. When I offered an invitation as a relative [of hers,] she replied, "This is deceitful and mendacious twaddle; my father, Rig-'dzin Yol-mo-ba, said no further

37. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 17.2-18.3. Obviously the whole affair was reported by sGam-po sPrul-sku to the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma; see ibid, pp. 18.2-3 (*slar sgam po sprul skus sne sbyor mdzad nas/ rgyal dbang mchog gi zhabs pad du car [bcar] rgyu'i bka' gros mdzad 'dug kyang/ phyis su rten 'brel ma 'grigs pas/ da lta cung zad grags pa chung zhing 'ga' zhig yid gnyis su 'gyur*). The person in question is sGam-po-pa sPrul-sku Bzang-po rdo-rje; for a biographical sketch of him see *Chos 'byung I*, pp. 731.2-733.11. In the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma, a meeting with the brother of the Third Yol-mo-ba and sGam-po sPrul-sku is noted for the year 1651. The latter took novitiate vows under the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma; see *Rtogs brjod II*, p. 318.13-15. The discussion concerning the young Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku may have taken place on this occasion.

38. See *Rtogs brjod II*, p. 680.2-3 (*rigs 'dzin stobs ldan dbang po'i sras zil gnon dbang grags rdo rje*); according to *Phyi'i rnam thar*, p. 29.1, the name Zil-gnon dbang-grags rdo-rje or Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje was given by the Dalai Bla-ma himself. For the way of addressing him in the official document see Dieter Schuh, "Eine tibetische Herrscherurkunde des 5. Dalai Lama aus dem Jahre 1676," in D. Schuh, *Grundlagen tibetischer Siegelkunde*, Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag (Monumenta Tibetica Historica, 3, 5), 1981, p. 309 (*byang bdag rigs 'dzin yab sras kyi brgyud 'dzin rigs 'dzin stobs ldan pa'i sras zil gnon dbang grags rdo rje*). I supplement the translation given by Schuh as follows: "Zil-gnon dbang-grags rdo-rje, the son of Rig-'dzin sTobs ldan-pa [dbang-po], who maintains the lineage of Byang-bdag Rigs-'dzin, father and son [= Byang-bdag bKras-shis stobs-rgyal and Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po]."

39. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, p. 39.1-2 (*nor bu bde chen gyis [gyi] zhal nas/ nga da len [lan] mi yongs/ drung pa 'jigs grags ni/ bstan 'dzin nor bu'i sku skyes yin na'ang 'dra/ min na'ang 'dra/ stobs ldan dbang po'i sras yin pas mchog [chog]*). For the studies of Nor-bu bde-chen of the family of mDo-bo-che under the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku see *Thob yig*, pp. 75-95; they were undertaken in 1633 at the site of [dKar-ye] dNgos-grub mtsho-gling in Mang-yul sKyid-grong. The father of Nor-bu bde-chen is sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' seng-ge, who had invited bsTan-'dzin nor-bu to the valley of [b]Tsum; see note 28.

> rebirth would come to Tibet." And there were many words besides. On one occasion, [finally,] I went to meet her, no matter what she thought; when I explained to her how the appropriate sign came to be located on my body as well as several of the hidden facts of former times, [i.e., of my past existence,] right then tears came into her eyes and the net of doubt was cut.[40]

As in the case of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, therefore, it is the visible bodily sign that in the end qualifies Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the incarnation of the man who helped construct the Bodhnāth stūpa, even if the same reputation was not accorded to him as to his predecessor because of it. This is in part obviously due to statements made by bsTan-'dzin nor-bu himself to the effect that there would not be another Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku in Tibet. Against this, we have the activities of Rig-'dzin sTobs-ldan dbang-po, who groomed his son so effectively for the role of resident of Bya-rung kha-shor – and cultivated the memory of his teacher and his teacher's lineage equally effectively – that the myth of the incarnation of the helper during the construction of the magnificent building nevertheless continued to remain alive.

It would be a fruitful endeavour to examine the spiritual and political activities of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje in detail. For instance, he carried out assignments for the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma in Shel-dkar, maintained close contact with the kings of Gorkha and Kathmandu (his sister was given in marriage to King Pratāpa Malla) and on two occasions was appointed overseer of the monasteries of Helambu. Also preserved are thorough accounts of his restoration work at Bya-rung kha-shor.[41] Shortly after this work he founded the monastery bSam-gtan gling in Rag-ma in the valley of Mang-yul sKyid-grong, and in the year 1709 we find him in Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar busy renovating the temple there. Little is known of the final years of the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku's life; it seems that he stayed primarily at bSam-gtan gling. One disciple of him repeatedly mentioned during this period is gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge; the copying of the "Outer Biography" was done on his initiative.

5. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms (1726-1789)

In the process whereby the incarnation of the First Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku was discovered, we saw how the rebirth was born into the family lineage of a treasure-discoverer. The Second and Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus were each the sons of disciples of the preceding incarnations. This phenomenon will also be witnessed in the case of the Fifth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, but since his father simultaneously belonged to a treasure-discoverer lineage, this latter needs to be briefly introduced.

gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge (1687-1738) was a fifth-generation descendant of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa (1480-1535). This treasure-discoverer of the rNying-ma-pa school had received the transmission of

40. *sPyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 49.6-50.4 (*yang las [la] stod phyogs la 'gro ba'i snang ba shar nas/ nged dpon slob rnams kyi [kyis] bram mtsho [grang so] dga' ldan du slebs [bslebs]/ de na skye bo mngon ma'i [sngon ma'i] bu mo chos 'dzin zer ba/ drang so dga' ldan pa'i bag gzhes [bshes] la yod pa/ kho bo'i [kho bos] gnyen 'phrad la shog byas pas/ nga'i yab rigs 'dzin yol mo ba de nyid/ bod du sku skyes mi 'phebs gsungs pa yod pas/ 'di khos [ko] rdzun zog lab pa yin zer/ kha stong mang po byas 'dug/ skabs zhig na ci sems kyang/ 'phrad pa la byon byung bas/ nga lus kyi rtags rme ba 'di bzhin yod tshul dang/ mngon [sngon] gyi gsang ba'i lo rgyus kha cig bshad pas/ de kha rang du mig nas chi ma [mchi ma] phyung [byung] shing yid gnyis kyi dra ba mchod [chod]*). See the remarks of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma in *rNam thar II*, fols. 75b/6 ff., where there is mention of a possible rebirth in India. That no further rebirth would come to Tibet is linked with the blocked recovery of the treasure in Ri-bo dpal-'bar; see note 25.

41. *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 78.2 ff. deals with the renovation work of the stūpa in the years 1706/1707. The statement by Dieter Schuh, "Ein Rechtsbrief des 7. Dalai Lama für den tibetischen Residenten am Stūpa von Bodhnāth," *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 8 (1974), p. 432: "A charge, primarily religious in motivation, to take up residence at this *stūpa*, which was looked upon as particularly sacred by Tibetans, ought at least to have included certain duties involving maintenance of the *stūpa* ... But the family was evidently not very active in this regard..." (my translation) must therefore be reconsidered. Concerning the sojourn in Helambu it may be noted that, according to the information supplied by Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje, the first monastery founded by sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, went up in flames in the 16th century, during which "written scrolls" (*gter shog*) and "sacred substances" (*gter rdzas*) from the treasures of Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer, Gu-ru chos-dbang and Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-can were destroyed; see *Phyi'i rnam thar*, pp. 75.3-76.1.

the Byang-gter teachings from sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po, and like him had been active at the court of the Gung-thang prince Kun-bzang Nyi-zla grags-pa. Pursuant to the ruler's requests he uncovered treasure-works in Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar – a cycle that had been hidden there by Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem 'phru-chu as a "treasure work to be rediscovered" (*yang gter*) – and left behind one offspring, Tshe-dbang bSod-nams rgyal-po by name.[42]

This offspring was the incarnation of sNgags-'chang Che-mchog rdo-rje of the mDo-bo-che family and was made the "representative" (*gnas 'dzin*) of the temple of Mang-yul Byams-pa sprin. Among his teachers we find the Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku Nam-mka' brgya'-byin.[43] The lineage was kept alive by the eldest son of Tshe-dbang bSod-nams rgyal-po; his name was sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' kun-bzang. The Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu and his brother Phyag-rdo nor-bu are mentioned as his main teachers. What is focussed on above all else in the short sketch of his life is the renovation work done on the temple of Mangs-yul Byams-pa sprin, during the course of which bsTan-'dzin nor-bu called Nam-mkha' kun-bzang his "heart's son" (*thugs kyi sras*).[44]

The third generation of descendants of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa is represented by the son of Nam-mkha' kun-bzang, Guru Śākya rgyal-mtshan; he, too, felt responsible for the temple of Mang-yul Byams-pa sprin, adorning it with statues and the like. Of his sons, the eldest was a certain sNgags-'chang Karma'i mtshan-can, who divided the "convent" (*bla brang*) of Byams-pa sprin into two halves, an "eastern" (*shar ma*) and a "northern" (*byang ma*) one. Further, objects from the treasures of Rig-'dzin bDud-'dul rdo-rje (1615-1672) from Eastern Tibet, came into his hands.[45]

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42. In providing information on the lineage of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa, I shall cite in the following only the text *gDung rabs II*; for the biography of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa see *ibid.*, pp. 5.4-12.3. This text is based in part on the biography of gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge, which was written in 1769 by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms; the latter work was filmed in the autumn of 1991 with the kind assistance of Lama Kunsang of Tarkye-Ghyang; see *Gu ru sūrya seng ge'i rnam thar mdor bsdus nges shes 'dren pa'i shing rta*, 36 fols., NGMPP reel-no. E 2691/6.

43. *gDung rabs II*, pp. 12.3-14.1. The lineage of the representatives of the monastery of Byams-pa sprin bears the name *gter-dbon-rgyud*; for a translation of this term in the case of the family of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa see Dieter Schuh, "Eine Herrscherurkunde des 5. Dalai Lama aus dem Jahre 1670" (as in note 38), p. 370: "descendants of treasure-discoverers in the (uncle-)nephew (order of succession)" (my translation). The connotations of the often used term *khu-dbon* that were read into the term *gter-dbon* do not apply; the latter is rather to be understood in the sense of *mes-dbon* (ancestor and grandson); for the term *dbon-rgyud* in reference to royal descendants, see Helga Uebach, "Notes on the Tibetan kinship term *dbon*," in *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Oxford: 1979, pp. 306-307. I would render *gter-dbon-rgyud* thus as "lineage of the grandsons (i.e. successors) of the treasure-discoverers." Therefore the assertions made by Graham E. Clarke, "The Great and Little Traditions in the Study of Yolmo," in Ernst Steinkellner & Helmut Tauscher, eds., *Contributions to Tibetan Language, History and Culture*, Vol. 1, Vienna: Arbeitskreis fur Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, 11), 1983, p. 27, would no longer be valid.

44. *gDung rabs II*, pp. 14.2-15.3. For a description of the meeting from the perspective of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, see note 28. A contemporary of sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' kun-bzang – and not to be confused with him – was sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' seng-ge; an offspring of the latter was mDo-bo-che'i sNgags-'chang Nor-bu bde-chen, who refused to accept Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku; see note 39. It may be pointed out that sNgags-'chang Nor-bu bde-chen for his part regarded his own son, bDud-'dul, as the reincarnation of his father; see *ibid*, p. 15.1-2.

45. *gDung rabs II*, pp. 15.3-17.4. In connection with the treasures of Rig-'dzin bDud-'dul rdo-rje, it may be mentioned that, Guru Śākya rgyal-mtshan studied under gTer-ston Gar-dbang rdo-rje (1640-1685) and also under O-rgyan dpal-bzang (1617-1677); the latter was a disciple of Rig-'dzin bDud-'dul rdo-rje and had brought relics from Khams to the region of present-day Thak Khola in Southern Mustang, which led to the founding of the monastery of sKu-tshab gter-lnga. See F.-K. Ehrhard, "Tibetan Sources on Muktināth. Individual Reports and Normative Guides," *Ancient Nepal: Journal of the Department of Archaeology*, 134 (1993), p. 26. Guru Śākya rgyal-mtshan also met gTer-ston Nyi-ma grags-pa (1647-1710), another treasure-discoverer from Khams, bestowing on him the "complete cycles" (*chos skor yongs rdzogs*) of the teachings of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa. Both gTer-ston Gar-dbang rdo-rje and gTer-ston Nyi-ma grags-pa discovered treasure works in the temple of Byams-pa sprin; see F.-K. Ehrhard,

gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge was the eldest son of sNgags-'chang Karma'i mtshan-can and the father of the Fifth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku. We learn from his short biography that his "root teacher" (*rtsa ba'i bla ma*) was Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje; under him he studied primarily the treasure-cycle *rDzogs chen yang tig ye shes mthong grol*, a finding of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa, and became his "heart's son." Singled out, as further teachers, are Kham-lung-pa Padma dbang-rgyal (1657-1731), Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang norbu and rDo dmar-ba Rig-'dzin Padma rdo-rje (d. 1738).

The invasion of the Dzungar armies in Tibet in 1717 and the associated persecution of the rNying-ma-pa school led Nyi-ma seng-ge to assume the life of a "renunciatory yogin" (*bya btang gi brtul zhugs*) and to wander through the hidden lands in the south, as described in the next section of his biographical sketch. With the aid of a teaching from the Byang-gter tradition, the *Byang gter nad bdag stobs 'joms kyi man ngag*, he succeeded in halting an epidemic that was sweeping the Kathmandu Valley during this time; in recognition of this he acquired a piece of land in Yol-mo from the king of Kathmandu, together with an official deed inscribed on a "copperplate" (*zangs yig bka' shog*). Afterwards, in the centre of the hidden land Yol-mo gangs-ra, he built the monastery Padma'i-chos gling and along with it, according to the "descriptions of the sacred site" (*gnas yig*) and "list of prophecies" (*lung byang*) of Padmasambhava, a temple at the summit of the mountain gYang-ri-ma. The temple, however, soon succumbed to natural destruction.[46]

Approximately at the time when gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge was receiving title to land in Yol-mo from Jaya Jagajjaya Malla, there occurred the birth of his son 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. As we learn from his short biography, the father recognized his son as a reincarnation:

> On the basis of his character, in which, from childhood on, the beneficial effects familiar from his earlier [existence] became increasingly apparent, his father identified him as the reincarnation of the '[spiritual] master of his family' (*rigs bdag*) Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje. An inquiry by lot was also made at the great stūpa Bya-rung kha-shor, and there was a positive response.[47]

Happily, a detailed biography of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms has been preserved, so that we can hear about the whole affair straight from his mouth, as it were. His father's designation of him as a reincarnation thereby takes on a different accent. The scene of events is a pilgrimage from Helambu to the Kathmandu Valley:

> The way it is said to have happened was that the attendant of my father put a question to me, in foolish talk, as to where the stūpa of Bya-rung kha-shor was located, and I [thereupon] raised my finger towards the great stūpa, as well as making signs that it was located in that direction; my father's heart was greatly joyed. And when afterwards my father, in checking the corresponding omens that occurred in my case, made inquiry by lot at the great stūpa in order [to identify] me as the highest reincarnation of the teacher who is the [spiritual] master of the family, and [although]

"Two Documents on Tibetan Ritual Literature and Spiritual Genealogy," *Journal of the Nepal Research Center*, 9 (1993), p. 81, note 5.

46. *gDung rabs I*, pp. 17.4-19.3. See also the biography of gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge according to the local tradition of Helambu in G. E. Clarke (as in note 4) pp. 15-18. There, too, the translation of the two deeds for the land donated by the king of Kathmandu Jaya Jagajjaya Malla (ruled 1722-1735) may be found; they date from the years 1723 and 1727. The site where Padma'i-chos gling Monastery was erected is located on the side of the mountain gYang-ri-ma, at a "place where the bullock's horn was flung" (*glang ra rgyag sa*). This is the present-day village of Tarkhye-Ghyang. The founding of the temple on top of the mountain gYang-ri-ma actually predates the founding of Padma'i-chos gling; the two foundings correspond to the two land deeds. The details of all these activities in the centre of Helambu in the 1730s are found in the biography of gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge (as in note 42), fols. 16b-27b. A lengthy discussion follows about the raising of a treasure-work in the temple of Mang-yul Byams-pa sprin, an act which is attributed both to gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge and to gTer-ston Nyi-ma grags-pa. See also *Chos 'byung I*, pp. 369.25-370.19.

47. *gDung rabs I*, p. 22.4-5: *sku na phra mo nas sngon gom [goms] gyi bag chags bzang po ches cher sad pa'i ngang tshul las yab rje nyid kyi [kyis] rigs bdag zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i yang srid du ngos 'dzin par mdzad do/ mchod rten chen po bya rung kha shor gyi drung du brtag sgril mdzad pa'ang bab*. Further variants of the designation "[spiritual] master of the family" can be found in the biography of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms.

it came out positive, I nevertheless did not need his [i.e., my father's] offering of all these flatterers and reincarnations.[48]

The incarnational status postulated by his father, gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge, having been rejected, the fate of the lineage of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus in the region of their origin was irremediably sealed by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. No concrete reasons are given in the autobiography for this rejection; one may suppose, however, that it had to do with the inheritance of the monastery in Yol-mo founded by his father. On the basis of a passage from the text that has already been dealt with by earlier research, we know that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms visited the area around the upper reaches of the Yangri Khola after his father's death in 1738 and was so disappointed by the decline of the "monastery's religious morals" (*dgon pa'i chos khrims*) that he avoided returning until 1748, beginning renovation work in Tarkhye-Ghyang only afterwards.[49] Moreover, he was already connected with another spiritual lineage through the family of his mother, so that the social prestige of an incarnation of his father's teacher was no longer of decisive importance. We shall briefly trace these maternal family ties and his education down to the year 1748 in order to obtain at least a rough picture of the last Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku from Helambu.

'Phrin-las bdud-'joms's mother, Chos-nyid rang-grol (d. 1746), was the daughter of rDo-dmar zhabs-drung Mi-'gyur rdo-rje (b. 1675), whose family lineage is known above all as the first Tibetan group that settled in the Glang-'phrang valley north-west of Yol-mo. Like the move of gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge to the latter hidden land, this settlement process has to be seen in the context of the invasion of the Dzungar armies in Tibet in 1717. It was in Glang-'phrang (present-day Langthang) that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms was taught by his father and mother how to read and write; the first teachings received from his father are of the Byang-gter tradition.[50] In the same year he travelled with his mother to the region of Mang-yul sKyid-grong, and in [dKar-ye] dNgos-grub mtsho-gling met the "[spiritual] master of our family" (*bdag cag gi rigs kyi bdag po*), an uncle called Rig-'dzin chen-po rDo-dmar-ba Padma rdo-rje, whom we have already met as a

48. *rNam thar IV*, p. 18.4-6 (*bdag nyid kyi mel tshe ba des bdag la mchod rten bya rung kha shor ga re/ zhes gre mo'i ['bre mo'i] tshul gyi dris yod 'dug par/ mchod rten chen po'i thad du mdzub mo sgreng zhing de phyogs su yod pa'i brda' ston byed par yab rje nyid shin tu thugs mnyes te/ de gong rje nyid rang la thugs ltas 'dra'ang byung tshod kyi [kyis] gang gi rigs bdag bla ma mchog gi sprul skur dogs pa'i mchod rten chen po'i drung du brtag sgril mdzad pa 'bab 'dug kyang/ bdag la ni go [kho] rang gi mchod pa'i spral spral dang sprul sprul gyi dgos pa med do*). It should be noted that in the year 1727 gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge met Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu in Byams-pa sprin and had received teachings from him; before this meeting the guardian deity of Byams-pa sprin had conferred the status of being the rebirth of Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu upon the son of a certain gSer-bzang ras-chen; see *rNam thar V*, pp. 125.3-126.2. This event is again testimony to the fact that the claims of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje were not accepted by official quarters; it may also have been one of the factors contributing to 'Phrin-las bdud-'jom's reaction.

49. For a treatment of these events, based on the biography of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, see G. E. Clarke (as in note 43) pp. 29-30. But compare *rNam thar IV*, pp. 29.6 & 30.3-4, where it is only the rejection of the right of succession and not the activities commencing in his twenty-second year to preserve religious sites that is focussed on. Concerning the biography itself, it may be said that the first part of the text falls under the genre of "narrative" and bears the title *sNang 'phrul pa'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod du gleng ba dpyid kyi nyi ring phul byed* (pp. 16.1-182.5); it was penned by 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms. The concluding part of the biography, covering the years 1786-1789, owes its existence to a disciple named Tshe-dbang 'Chi-med mgon-po (1755-1807) of the mDo-bo-che family (pp. 183.1-266.3). Concerning this disciple see note 53.

50. *rNam thar IV*, p. 20.4. Of interest here is the fact that the place where 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms met his father at age eight was the Ca-thang cave at the "sacred site Heavenly Gate of Half-Moon Form" (*gnas chen zla gam gnam sgo*); this is an alternative name of the Glang-'phrang valley, referring to its status as a hidden land of the rNying-ma-pa school. For a text of rDo-dmar-ba Mi-'gyur rdo-rje dealing with the myth and localisation of the valley "Heavenly Gate of Half-moon Form" see F.-K. Ehrhard (as in note 5), pp. 341-346. A recently published history of the rDo-dmar-ba family – which traces the origin of its members to the region on the border between Gung-thang and La-stod Byang – deals extensively with Rig-'dzin Mi-'gyur rdo-rje and his activities; see Brag-sne Kun-bzang chos-'phel, *rNam grol rtsangs rdo dmar ba'i gdung rabs lo rgyus deb ther padma rāga'i do shal*, Delhi: Dakney Tsan Domar Namdolling, 1998, pp. 89.1-137.13.

teacher of his father gTer-dbon Nyi-ma seng-ge. He took the vows of a noviate at the sacred site of Ri-bo dpal-'bar under this member of the rDo-dmar-ba family and received the name Rig-'dzin 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms.[51] A further formulation used to designate his teacher is the "teacher, who is the [spiritual] master of the family" (*rigs kyi bdag po bla ma*); these very same words were also used to characterize Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje as the teacher of the father of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, that is, the family of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa. Here, perhaps, lies the true reason for the reserve shown towards the incarnational status that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms's father had wished to see conferred on him: there were stronger ties to his mother's family line (the descendants of rDo-dmar-ba Mi-'gyur rdo-rje) than to his father's (the descendants of Rig-'dzin bsTan-gnyis gling-pa).

Another maternal uncle was likewise one of his teachers (rDo-dmar-ba Mi-'gyur rdo-rje had a total of five sons); his name was rDo-dmar-ba Kun-bzang bsTan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan. His third teacher, whom he met at the age of 16, again in [dKar-ye] dNgos-grub mtsho-gling, was Kham-lung-pa gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, a disciple of the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las (1640-1718): and again it were the transmissions of the Byang-gter tradition that were received. In 1744, finally, he came into contact with a representative of the family of mDo-bo-che named O-rgyan gSang-sngags bstan-'dzin, a disciple both of Zil-gnon dBang-rgyal rdo-rje and gTer-bdag gling-pa (1646-1714).

For the year 1747 the biography mentions the sojourn in Mang-yul Byams-pa sprin and the consideration given to renovating this site. It is at this point in time that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms hears of the arrival of Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu in Nepal. Soon thereafter he is in the Kathmandu Valley meeting with this most important of his teachers – in Bya-rgod phung-po-ri, that is, at Kimdol vihāra near Svayambhūnāth. A description follows of a renovation of the Bodhnāth stūpa, and the teachings that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms received from Kaḥ-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu at Bya-rung kha-shor.[52]

With this visit of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms to Bodhnāth, we have come to the last contact the local lineage of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus had with the Bya-rung kha-shor stūpa. The myth of the helper to the goose-keeper obviously no longer had the same force as it did a hundred years earlier at the birth of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje. The Malla dynasty was showing signs of drawing to a close, and the rulers of Gorkha were arming in preparation to seize control of the three kingdoms of the Kathmandu Valley. Concerning 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, it may be noted that he rebuilt the temple and meditation cells founded in Yol-mo by his father and upheld the tradition – again on the paternal side of his family – of maintaining the temple of Mang-yul Byams-pa sprin. Thus the texts report that in 1765, at the age of 38, he constructed a new convent, renovated the old temple and had religious objects made. In doing so, he caused the "earlier system of mDo-chen" (*sngar srol mdo chen lugs*) to flourish again.[53]

51. *rNam thar IV*, p. 21.2-6. The place called dKyar-ye is located in the vicinity of Mang-yul Ri-bo dpal-'bar and was already used as a retreat place by sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po; see *Chos 'byung I*, p. 530.19. This is where Rig-'dzin mChog-ldan mgon-po had been invited by the First Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku; see note 5. The site is also mentioned – under the names *skyid grong gi dgon pa dkar ye* and *skyid grong dkar ye* – by the Second rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin, in *rNam thar III*, pp. 355.6, 358.3; it was there that the teachings of sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po were transferred to Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan bDud-'joms rdo-rje. It was there, too, that mDo-bo che-ba Nor-bu bde-chen received the teachings of the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku in the year 1633; see note 39. Concerning the visit of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje to [dKar-ye] dNgos-grub mtsho-gling, see note 36.

52. *rNam thar IV*, pp. 45.5-50.2. Concerning the Kimdol vihāra and the renovation of the Bodhnāth stūpa by Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu in 1748, see F.-K. Ehrhard, "A Renovation of Svayaṃbhūnāth-Stūpa in the 18th Century and its History (according to Tibetan Sources)," *Ancient Nepal: Journal of the Department of* Archaeology, 114 (1989), pp. 4-5. Among the teachings that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms received during his month in Bya-rung kha-shor was one concerning a special transmission of Mahākaruṇika teachings; the text that 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms wrote on this occasion was filmed by NGMPP under reel-no. E 1286/26: *'Phags pa thugs rje chen po'i dmar khrid bla ma'i zhal lung zin bris su bkod pa*, 14 fols.

53. *rNam thar, IV*, pp. 128.1 ff., and *gDung rabs, II*, pp. 24.5-25.3. The mDo-bo-che family, to which sNgags-'chang Che-mchog rdo-rje belonged (see note 43), as did sNgags-'chang Nam-mkha' seng-ge (see note 28) and his son Nor-bu bde-chen (see note 39), is obviously one of the oldest and most influential families in Mang-yul Gung-thang.

The name under which 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms was known in the second half of his life shows us, finally, that the last link in the incarnational chain active in the region of its origin – in spite of his own personal choice to disregard the status – repeatedly returned to sacred sites for his spiritual practice that had already been frequented by his predecessors. The name given 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms by his disciples' generation, namely "Dharma Master of mGon-gnang" (*mgon gnang chos rje*), refers to a place in Mang-yul sKyid-grong where the tutelary god Mahākāla had revealed himself directly to the Tangut translator Tsa-mi Sangs-rgyas grags (12th cent.), conferring on him the rights of ownership to the site; the place is thus called "[the place] conferred by the protector" (*mgon gnang*).[54] bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku, had already stayed in this place; the memory of his visit and its significance remained alive, even if corroborating sources are missing:

> [There] for a long time the reincarnation had stayed, the great Yol-mo-ba [sPrul-sku], and the manner in which he met his own father, Lo-chen Chos-rje, in a pure vision, how they posed questions and gave answers to one another, and so on – this is revealed clearly in his [i.e. the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku's] Collected Works. His younger brother, rGyal-sras Phyag-rdor nor-bu, likewise had stayed there.[55]

It is thus these recurring places of sojourn that endow the lineage of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus with a certain continuity. They are located primarily in the region of Mang-yul sKyid-grong and were visited from the beginning of the 16th to the end of the 18th centuries. As far as the sites on the territory of Nepal are concerned, that is, the sacred site of Bya-rung kha-shor and the hidden land of Yol-mo gangs-ra, this continuity was lost, and with it the memory of the incarnational chain which had played such a great role in the upkeep of the stūpa (for this sequence of the lineage see *Appendix II*).

Another offshoot of this interesting incarnational chain, however, shows that it was not forgotten very long: the memory of the Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus came back again – and were recontinued – in another region in the borderlands of south-western Tibet.[56]

The most important disciple of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, Tshe-dbang 'Chi-med mgon-po, wrote, according to his own testimony, a *mDo chen bla brgyud rnam thar*, which up to now has not been recovered; see his autobiography: *Gur gyi sngags ban tshe dbang 'chi med mgon po'i rang tshul chu 'babs su brjod pa lhung lhung snyan pa'i chu sgra*, Dalhousie: Damchoe Sangpo, 1982, p. 15.5. The first part of the text (pp. 12.1-145.5) was completed by its author in 1803; it was expanded by Brag-dkar rta-so sPrul-sku Chos-kyi dbang-phyug (pp. 146.1-163.4). Along with the biography of 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms, this work contains informative material on the cultural and religious history of Mang-yul sKyid-grong in the 18th century.

54. Besides the name *mgon gnang chos rje* one also finds *rig 'dzin mgon gnang pa chen po*; see *gDung rabs II*, p. 22.4. The site and its foundation myth are described, for example, by Zhabs-dkar Tshogs-drug rang-grol, who also pays attention to the natural beauty of this retreat place; see his autobiography (as in note 8), pp. 725.8-765.12, and Matthieu Ricard (as in note 8), pp. 366-385.

55. *rNam thar IV*, p. 183.5-6 (*sprul pa'i sku yol mo ba chen pos yun ring du bzhugs shing dag pa'i gzigs snang su nyid kyi yab lo chen chos rje dang njal zhing zhu lan mdzad tshul sogs gang gi bka' 'bum du gsal/ cung [gcung] rgyal ba'i sras po phyag rdor nor bus kyang bzhugs te*). For the father of bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, Lo-chen Ratnabhadra sPrul-sku, see note 15. According to *Thob yig*, p. 84.5, bsTan-'dzin nor-bu wrote a biography of his father. It has no more survived than has the edition of his entire writings. 'Phrin-las bdud-'joms had visionary meetings with the Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku at the same site; see *gDung rabs II*, p. 25.6.

56. A second line branched off after Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje with a certain mThu-stobs rdo-rje (18th cent.), whom we can thus also call the Fifth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku. The next incarnation, a certain Rig-'dzin Padma 'phrin-las (1773-1836) chose dGon-pa byang in the area of gTing-skyes, near the border of Sikkim, as his residence; this lineage exists up to the present, with the Tenth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku now residing in Gangtok. The history of the "rebirth from Yol-mo" down through this line can be found in mTha'-bral rdo-rje, *mTshungs med dpal mgon bla ma dam pa gting skyes dgon pa byang gi mchog gi sprul gyi 'khrungs rabs bcu'i rnam par thar pa mdo tsam brjod pa*, Thimphu-Delhi: Kunzang Tobgyal & Mani Dorje, 1979.

APPENDIX I

Editions and Autobiographical Writings of the Third and Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-skus

bsTan-'dzin nor-bu

The Autobiography and Collected Writings (gSung thor bu) of the Third Rig-'dzin Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, Vols. 2, pp. 465 and 376, Dalhousie: Damchoe Sangpo, 1977 [= I].

Collected Writings of Yol-mo sPrul-sku bsTan-'dzin nor-bu, pp. 506, Delhi: Lama Dawa, 1982 [= II].

Autobiographical Writings:

a. *Rig sngags 'chang ba thams cad kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rgyal ba chen po'i skyes rabs kyi 'phreng ba bstod pa pad dkar brgyan 'phreng* (for a translation see Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Philip Pierce & Christoph Cüppers, *Views of the Bodhnāth-Stūpa,* Kathmandu: Eigenverlag [privately published], 1991).
I: 3 fols. (vol. 1, pp. 1-16); II: 3 fols. (pp. 1-6)

b. *rTogs brjod mkhas pa'i rna rgyan*
I: 19 fols. (vol. 1, pp. 6-44); II: 14 fols. (pp. 249-276)

c. *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa rdo rje'i sgra ma'i brgyud mangs* (written in 1632)
I: 102 fols. (vol. 1, pp. 63-267); II: 77 fols. (pp. 95-248)

d. No title: "Illustrations to the life of Yol-mo-ba bsTan-'dzin nor-bu" (translation under preparation)
I: 9 fols. (vol. 1, pp. 45-60); II: - - -

Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje

The Autobiographical Reminiscences and Writings of the 17th Century Nyingmapa Visionary, Rig-'dzin Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje, pp. 497, Gangtok-Delhi: Gonpo Tseten, 1977 [= I].

The Collected Autobiographical Writings and Works on rNying-ma-pa Philosophy of Rig-'dzin Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje, pp. 351, Delhi: Tibet House, 1977 [= II].

Collected Writings of Zil-gnon dBang-rgyal rdo-rje. A Collection of Texts by an Exponent of the rNying-ma-pa Tradition from the Sino-Nepalese Borderland, pp. 448, Darjeeling: Konchog Lhadrepa, 1985 (not accessible to me).

Autobiographical Writings:

a. *sPrul pa'i rig 'dzin chen po zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i phyi'i rnam thar ngo mtshar rmad byung rna ba'i bdud rtsi*
I: 44 fols. (pp. 1-87); II: 25 fols. (pp. 1-51)

b. *sPrul pa'i rig 'dzin chen po zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i nang gi rnam thar las zhal gdams gsung mgur gyi rim pa nges don rgya mtsho*
I: 64 fols. (pp. 88-215); II: 42 fols. (pp. 53-136)

c. *sPrul pa'i rig 'dzin chen po zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i nang gi rnam thar las zab lam bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi rim pa byin rlabs dngos grub kyi bang mdzod*
I: 25 fols. (pp. 216-265); II: 18 fols. (pp. 137-173)

d. *rJe bla ma rig 'dzin grub pa'i dpa' bo zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i dag snang gsang ba'i rnam thar mkha'' 'gro'i 'phrin glu*
I: 16 fols. (pp. 266-296); II: 10 fols. (pp. 175-193)

e. *sPrul pa'i rig 'dzin chen po zil gnon dbang rgyal rdo rje'i nang gi rnam thar las bstan bcos ljags bris kyi rim pa dgos 'dod kun 'byung nor bu'i do shal*
I: 101 fols. (pp. 297-497); II: 78 fols. (pp. 195-351)

APPENDIX II

Two further editions of the collected writings of Zil-gnon dbang-rgyal rdo-rje were filmed by the NGMPP under reel-nos. E 2676/4-8 and AT 131/7-132/3. The second edition was part of the Tibetan collection of the Nepalese National Museum (Chauni) and is now preserved in the Nepalese National Archives (Ramshah Path); the illustrations of the sequence of the lineage up to the Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku are from this manuscript.

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Chos 'byung II: Kun-bzang Nges-don klongs-yangs, Dog-sprul Rig-'dzin (b. 1814), *Bod du byung ba'i gsang sngags snga 'gyur gyi bstan 'dzin skyes mchog rim byon gyi rnam thar nor bu'i do shal*, 186 fols., Dalhousie: Damchoe Sangpo, 1976.

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gDung rabs II: Chos-kyi dbang-phyug, Brag-dkar rta-so sPrul-sku (1775-1837), *gTer dbon rig 'dzin brgyud pa'i gdung rabs lo rgyus nor bu do shal*, 18 fols., in *A History of the Descendants of Gter-ston Bstan-gnyis gling-pa by Brag-dkar-rta-so sPrul-sku Mi-pham-chos-kyi dbang-phyug with Other of the Author's Works*, Delhi: Lama Dawa, 1982, pp. 1-36.

rNam thar I: Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, Fifth Dalai Bla-ma (1617-1682), *Byang pa'i rig 'dzin chen po ngag gi dbang po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar bkod pa'i rgya mtsho*, 64 fols., in *bKa' ma mdo dbang gi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, Leh: S.W. Tashigangpa (Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod, 37), 1972, pp. 427-553.

rNam thar II: *ibid. Zur thams cad mkhyen pa chos dbyings rang grol gyi rnam thar theg mchog bstan pa'i shing rta*, 121 fols., NGMPP reel-no E 2247/2 [repr. as *Collected Works (Gsung-'bum) of the Vth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho*, 9, Gangtok: Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, 1992, pp. 1-242].

rNam thar III: Padma 'phrin-las, Third rDo-rje brag Rig-'dzin (1640-1718), *'Dus pa'i mdo dbang gi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar ngo mtshar dad pa'i phreng ba*, 213 fols., in *bKa' ma mdo dbang gi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, Leh: S.W. Tashigangpa (Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod, 37), 1972, pp. 1-425.

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Thob yig: Nor-bu bde-chen, Mdo-chen-pa (b. 1617) et al., *A Collection of Records of Teachings and Initiations Received by Masters of the Gur-phu or mDo-chen Tradition of the Rnying-ma-pa*, pp. 605, Dalhousie: Damchoe Sangpo, 1980.

PICTURES



1. The helper of the woman keeper of geese



2. The Buddhist minister Padma Gung-btsan



3. The treasure-discoverer sNgags-'chang Śākya bzang-po



4. Second Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku Nam-mkha' brgya-byin



5. Third Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku
bsTan-'dzin nor-bu



6. Fourth Yol-mo-ba sPrul-sku Zil-gnon
dbang-rgyal rdo-rje

THE SHIFTING TERRAIN OF THE TANTRIC BODIES OF BUDDHAS AND BUDDHISTS FROM AN ATIYOGA PERSPECTIVE

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The present paper examines the tantric figuration of the body from the perspective of the eleventh through fourteenth century Tibetan Atiyoga tradition. The first part outlines a general scheme of the body within Indian Buddhist tantra from a perspective that attempts to show how the Atiyoga's own understanding of the body, while unusual, is a deeply creative interpretation of long standing Buddhist trends. It is thus important not to misunderstand the general statements made herein as an attempt to talk about Indian Buddhist tantra per se, for which they are surely quite inadequate. The second part turns to Atiyoga's own highly distinctive interpretation of the body against that background.

I would like to note my gratitude at being able to include this study in the present volume in honor of Gene Smith. Having been inspired for many years by Gene's legendary corpus of Tibetan historiography, it has been a great pleasure to be equally inspired by his impressive work at digitizing Tibetan texts and reference materials over the past few years, as well as a close friendship with someone who is as wonderful a human being as he is a scholar.

PART 1: INDIAN BUDDHIST TANTRA FROM TIBETAN PERSPECTIVES

While the tradition in question has a Sanskrit rubric (Atiyoga), undoubtedly is the elaboration of a movement that has its inception among Indian figures in the eighth century, and claims itself to be authored by a series of famous eighth century Indian Buddhists (Surativajra, Mañjuśrīmitra, Jñānasūtra, Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava), my own research indicates that in fact the tradition represents arguably the first truly innovative transformation of tantra into a distinctively Tibetan form during the eleventh to twelfth century. Its own apophatic rhetoric and mythic authorization of visionary revelation and excavation of texts presented in form of the channeled voices and pens of Buddhas (redacted as *The Seventeen Tantras*), Indian Paṇḍitas and Indian Siddhas (redacted as *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra*) performed an intertwined function of maintaining a permeable boundary through which Indian tantra could be both assimilated and yet transformed in creatively Tibetan manners. This boundary allowed these early Tibetan formulators of the tradition to avoid the dangers of succumbing to the immense pressure of Indological conformity stemming from the sudden massive importation of Buddhist Indians in the bodily presence of Paṇḍitas and Siddhas, as well as the bodily presence of the Buddhas painstakingly reconstructed in Tibetan graphemes and bodies through the large scale translation project which swept over Tibet from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. The tradition thus represents a creative Tibetan synthesis of the cutting edge of Indian Buddhist tantrism in the eleventh century, as well as possibly Hindu tantric streams, particularly from Kashmir.

While there has been of late well deserved criticism of scholarship which uncritically uses later Tibetan tantric values, beliefs and classification schemes to schematize the history of Indian Buddhist tantra, there is also a equally problematic potential Indological trend of falsely constructing a watertight bounded zone of "pure" Indian tantra uncontaminated by the alien bodies of those who prowl outside the pale of India proper. In fact, Indian Buddhist tantra was clearly, like so much of Buddhism, a profoundly international movement (particularly from the seventh to twelfth century) which transgressed cultural barriers in such ways as to explode the ritually constructed space of cultural purity in which it is sometimes coerced into inhabiting. In particular, tantra took deep root in Tibet from at least the seventh century onwards, and in the simultaneously final flowering and withering of Buddhist tantra on the Indian subcontinent during the eleventh to twelfth centuries, Tibetans constituted a major force in the state of tantra in South Asia. The reduction of this to the utilization of Tibetan translations of Indian texts to supplement a fragmented body of surviving originals in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and so on, thus results not only in an un-tantric ideology of

constructing barriers where none exist to create and maintain a zone of imagined purity, but also results in the scholarly resurrection of a crippled Buddha, a maṇḍala only partially shaded in and riveted by abyssal gaps where dialogues become monologues and interaction becomes individual action. This tendency has been perhaps unintentionally supported by the emphasis in some circles of locating Hindu tantra increasingly within a Vedic-informed mainstream and deconstructing the earlier, and admittedly problematic, invocation of an orgiastic tribal culture or substratum that disrupts that mainstream, disruptions which often seem placed in that same Himalayan zone where Tibeto-Burmese culture has traditionally dominated. These tendencies are particularly problematic in discussing the nature of subtle bodies in Buddhist tantrism, since there has been at this point no convincing evidence adduced to place such ideology and praxis any earlier than the eighth century, and it appears Tibetans were involved in creative lineages of these transmissions from very early on. For these reasons, I would suggest that looking into the ideology and praxis of bodies, and particularly subtle ones, in ninth to twelfth century Buddhist and Hindu tantra demands hermeneutic transgression, in particular that of the false cultural boundaries with which we have shaped our object of inquiry into an unconscious reflection of our own inevitable scholarly limitations and biases.

My paper will thus have two parts: (i) a brief survey of Indian Buddhist tantra with a focus on paradigms governing the body in the context of the Tibetan Atiyoga tradition's interpretative stance, and (ii) a presentation of the Seminal Heart (*snying thig*, **citta-tilaka*) Atiyoga or Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*, **mahāpurṇa*) tradition with a focus on how its contemplative traditions of the subtle body are presented as transcending the perceived limitations of the deity yoga-oriented paradigms of earlier Buddhist tantra.

Tantra as Deity-yoga centric: encounter to identification and back again[1]

The later phases of Buddhist tantra in India known under the rubric of the Anuttarayoga tantras generally classified their various contemplative techniques into two sequentially ordered types: generation phase (*bskyed rim*, *utpatti-krama*) and perfection phase (*rdzogs rim*, *utpanna- or saṃpanna-krama*) practices respectively. This categorization was partially an attempt to introduce innovative contemplations (the latter) and theoretically justify them as complimentary processes to previously standard tantric contemplative practices (the former). The perfection phase is thus generally understood as bringing the generation phase practices to "perfection" or "completion," thereby both integrating with, and subordinating, the earlier standard modes of contemplation. The generation stage praxis of visualizing self as Buddha gives rise to a vision of transcendence in stark contrast to one's mundane existence (*generation*), and that vision is then fully embodied by perfection stage praxis as it culminates in the visionary's thorough physical incarnation of a new order of existence (*perfection*), a new organizing principle that begins to assert itself in and as oneself.[2]

However, in *An Esoteric Precept: The Garland of Views*, a Mahāyoga text attributed to Padmasambhava in the late ninth century,[3] we find the expression "the triad of generation and perfection" (*bskyed rdzogs gsum*).[4] This is used doxographically to present the highest tantric teachings as being a tripartite "inner yogic tantric vehicle of efficacious means" (*rnal 'byor nang pa thabs kyi rgyud kyi theg pa*): the generation mode (*bskyed pa'i tshul*), the perfection mode (*rdzogs pa'i tshul*) and the great perfection mode (*rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul*). In the current context I would like to suggest utilizing this model to instead classify the wildly heterogeneous and plural history of Buddhist tantric contemplation into three distinct yet

1. My presentation of various approaches to the body in Indian Buddhist tantra is an imaginative reconstruction of the Seminal Heart reading of that history. It thus focuses on how Tibetans appropriate, simplify and nuance Indian Buddhism, and should not be understood as attempting an objective Indological survey that adequately details the pluralistic nature of Indian Buddhist tantra in its own right on these issues.
2. Cozort 1986, pp. 27 and 41.
3. The text appears to genuinely be quite old, though it may be impossible to ever definitively prove that it actually goes back to the hand of Padmasambhava rather than a somewhat later and still unknown Tibetan author.
4. See Karmay 1988, pp. 155-158 and 173.

often intertwined phases that to *some* degree were chronologically successive.[5] In simplistic terms, my adaptation of the model in the present context signifies (i) the visualization practices that involves scripted imaginal evocations (*sādhana, sgrub thabs*)[6] of pre-described forms of a Buddha located either external to oneself or, in what came to be known as deity yoga, transmuting the practitioner's own bodily self-perception; (ii) non-conceptual and image-free meditation following the dissolution of imaginal processes, the transition of visualizations into spontaneous naturally occurring visions, or subtle body praxis involving detailed representations of the body's interior that goes hand in hand with the explosion of horrific and sexual imagery; and (iii) the radical deconstruction of complex deity-yoga centered tantric contemplation that tends to aestheticize the cruder aspects of tantric focus on sexuality, violence and death, while contemplatively favoring either strict non-conceptual states, simple visualizations or imaginal processes that are centered around more spontaneous image flow.

In proposing this threefold model, I am in no way suggesting my brief analysis does justice to the immense diversity of Indian Buddhist tantra nor the equally vast gaps in the surviving evidence, whether, literary, ethnographic or archaeological. Instead I am adapting a relatively late indigenous scheme for modeling that diversity as a way of suggesting how some later Indians and Tibetans narrativized the symbolic logic of the historical development of tantra. This may in turn offer insights into a possible broad-based scheme for understanding the actual history of Buddhist tantra in India which illuminates some of its particulars, though necessarily gliding over, and marginalizing, others. Based upon the pervasive historical doxographical attempts to classify tantras and the many associated models such as "the triad of generation and perfection," I term this a narrative in the sense of a mode of thematically structuring a wide variety of materials and movements into a sequentially unfolding series of developments that comes to a climax in the final revelations.[7] The three elements of this narrative are inextricably linked by two common loci of concern: (i) the encounter with Buddha(s) on shifting terrains, ranging over the space in front, the surface of one's body, the body's mute interior and the body's mapped interior; and (ii) a grounding within bodies on every imaginable register, including the many bodies of the Buddha, one's own body as a locus for the dreamed of encounters, and the body as a premier tool for thinking *and* writing of texts. The earliest phase of (i) visual encounters with the Buddha are eventually formalized and extended in the "generation stage" practice of ritually fabricating a new divine body for oneself in deity yoga; the later phases of (ii) deepening that fabrication through an instantiation of the Buddha's interior reality via subtle body praxis are known as the "perfection stage"; and the return to (iii) a naturalistic rejection or transformation of all such praxis in preference for a celebration of the mute, ineffable divinity of the body's ordinary reality came to be known most commonly as the Great Perfection or the Great Seal (*phyag rgya chen po*, *mahāmudrā*).

Buddha-encounters in Mahāyāna ritual and vision

I will begin by briefly looking to the origins of Buddhist tantra in India, which would appear to lie in those elements of Mahāyāna that are literally, and literarily, obsessed with the physical form of the Buddha(s), in other words, his visible bodies. Snellgrove has argued that early Buddhist "tantra" (which he terms Mantrayāna), later doxographically classified as "Kriyā" and "Caryā" (both words meaning a rite of any kind), was in fact not originally anything other than the main ritual texts accompanying standard Mahāyāna sūtras.[8] At a time when later specifically tantric images, ideologies and practices seem to have been

5. While all three stages temporally overlap in Indian Buddhism, a clearer chronological succession can be discerned with the first and second, while the delineation between the second and third is more based on developmental logic than temporal sequence. My scheme thus bears only a general relationship to the more temporally oriented classification of an early, middle and later period Indian Buddhist tantra by Matsunaga (see de Jong 1984, p. 92).
6. See Cozort 1996 for a brief overview of tantric sādhanas.
7. See Hopkins 1996 for a related discussion of how Tibetan doxography structures a dynamic worldview. In the present context, the particular style and orientation of the narrative derives from the perspective of the Atiyoga tradition which is the subject of my paper.
8. Snellgrove 1987, pp. 233-4.

unknown, these texts provided "the directions and liturgies for the worship of the regular Mahāyāna divinities and... introduced the kind of consecration ceremony for a would-be Bodhisattva." These texts and the Mahāyāna religious practices they represented lack the complicated initiatory structure with attendant vows that characterized later Buddhist tantra, though subsequent tantric exegetes retroactively claimed them as part of their own history. According to Snellgrove, they also lacked extended speculative material beyond the description of ritual procedures, since in fact they written as complements to the speculative materials found in the standard range of Mahāyāna Sūtras to which they were linked.

In part, the development of ritual Mahāyāna was driven by the reappropriation of Vedic ritual technology for ritually fabricating a divine body and evoking divine presences, as well as various interactions with those divinities. Once Mahāyāna proponents begin to create a renovated ritual system supporting its emergent cults of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, it became a pressing need to mark ritual space, ritually construct the deities' bodies, invite and evoke the deities, make offerings to the divine presences, and conduct other transactions. A turn towards Vedic and later Hindu ritual apparatus was natural given that the basic technology and ideology for inviting and interacting with divine presences in a human space was already fully worked out in the wider spectrum of general Indian religious life in which Buddhism was always situated. Although this importation of ritual was resituated within a quite different religious discourse and brought into the service of entirely new gods, it remains a valid area of inquiry to ask what types of ideologies also reentered Buddhism in the process, ideologies indelibly inscribed in the ritual forms themselves. At any rate, in brief, these early stages of "tantra" gradually developed into a "maṇḍala, mudrā and mantra" brand of Buddhist practice, as the sought after presence of the Buddha(s) increasingly involved the ritual manipulation of mantras and mudrās to interact with a divine presence situated within a wider configuration of sacred figures. Developmentally, we can also trace a gradual shift from pure encounters with an autonomous Buddha appearing in the field of vision, to an ideology of identity-transference where the Buddha descends as a gnostic spirit (*ye shes babs*) directly into the practitioner's own body, which had already been imaginatively transfigured into the Buddha's surface body image: from encounter to identification. This profoundly non-Vedic element of standard and widespread self-identification with deity of course had already entered post-Vedic forms of discourse and practice from the Upanishadic literature onwards.

These movements were rooted in earlier practices of "recollecting the Buddha" (*buddhānusmṛti*), which utilize various techniques to evoke a sense of the absent founder of the tradition, a founder whose numinous presence had gradually been relocated in a variety of cosmic figures in addition to the historical Śākyamuni. It should be pointed out that this recollection also involved a focus on the moral and mental attributes of the Buddha,[9] but that it was the highlighting of his bodily image that personalized this recollection beyond a mere cultivation of valued yet abstract ethical and intellectual qualities. In other words, it was the concern with physical presence that rendered these meditations into a visceral encounter with the Enlightened One, a dramatic scenario unfolding in real bodily time. And it is with this physical presence that we could perhaps locate the prehistory of subtle body discourse in Buddhism, in this passionate concern for the marvelous *external* physical marks of the Buddha, most famously in the codified set of thirty two characteristics (*lakṣaṇa, mtshan*) and eighty secondary distinctions (*anuvyañjana, dpe byad bzang po*).[10] My point here is that the early concern for the Buddha's physical form, his *rūpa-kāya*, focuses exclusively on the *superficial* attributes of his body's surface, as does the corresponding early contemplations. In addition, the early accounts clearly involve bodily *encounters*, not visceral attempts to concretely embody the Buddha's presence within one's own body image. The *Pratyutpanna Sūtra* discussed and translated by Harrison presents the encounter scenario in its purest terms,[11] without any trace of self-identification with the deity (nor any later tantric facets such as the sexualization or horrification of the Buddha maṇḍala, subtle bodies,

9. Harrison 1978, p. 38.
10. Wayman 1957.
11. I borrow this word from David Need, who coined it in this context.

or transgression). Most interestingly for reasons that will become clear below, we find that the subject is not the scripted Buddha encounters so common in Mahāyāna ritual, but rather concentrated practice in the hope of a spontaneous visitation unfolding of its own accord in either daytime or in dreams.[12] The contemplative guidelines are rather general, but they clearly focus the practitioner's attention on the Buddha's visual form using oral or written texts describing these Buddhas as a basis.[13] Harrison argues that literary accounts of quests involving visions of Buddhas – such as the famous story of Sadāprarudita in the *Aṣñasāhastrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* – are more than mere dramatic elements, but rather reflect the widespread nature of these types of practices.[14]

In addition, Harrison sees two quite different traditions of this concern for Buddha visions and encounters in terms of relationships to the emptiness and Bodhicitta discourse and praxis of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*.[15] Texts such as the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* completely ignore emptiness discourse, treat the Buddha encounter as an actual event involving rebirth in his pure land, and are largely motivated by a desire for the material and sensual goal of rebirth in the paradisiacal pure land; in contrast to this, the *Pratyutpanna Sūtra* integrates emptiness discourse, treats the Buddha encounters as dream-like encounters stemming from the practitioner's own mind that can occur throughout life, and advocates being motivated by the altruistic desire to gain enlightenment. In the latter context, the ontological status of the vision is explicitly raised as an issue,[16] in response to which it is stressed that the visions must not be reified or become the source of attachment. Instead the visions are dream-like, and the reader is urged to not consider as experiences of real entities. In this context, there are extended discussions of emptiness which strongly stress the importance of integrating concentration on the Buddha's visual form with an understanding of emptiness. This integration of Buddha cults and emptiness is an important precursor to the ideology of deity yoga, where the mind perceiving emptiness is none other than that which appears in the form of the deity's body.[17]

It should be noted that the spontaneous element of unexpected apparitions is stressed, with limited visualization being a means to that end; this is in contrast to later tantra were the ritualized sequences of visualization increasingly assume the center stage. Finally, in addition to the desire to worship (*pūjā*) the divine presence as a merit-producing activity,[18] the visions of Buddhas are sought in order to hear their canonical voice resound once again, resulting in the reception of often totally unknown teachings. Thus the sense of hearing was at least as important as seeing,[19] thereby connecting these contemplative processes to the production of new canonical literature as well as to that literature's continued oral narrative setting ("I once heard..."). In other words, these practices ensured that there was continued legitimate access to the voices of the Buddhas that was extra-canonical, i.e. revelatory beyond transmitted bodies of scripture.

These developments in early Mahāyāna were linked to the phenomena of the expanding Buddha, i.e. the process in which focus on the historical Śākyamuni was gradually displaced, or diversified, into a wide variety of Buddhas believed to simultaneously exist in various dimensions.[20] In conjunction with this, the recollection of the Buddha became a cultic practice directed at plural Buddhas, a process which perhaps contributed to a greater aestheticization as the Buddhas in question no longer were located within mundane historical scenarios. The image of the Buddha is inextricably bound up with the figure of the Teacher, such that a Buddha is generally thought of in terms of the dialogic environment of a teacher surrounded by students. These new Buddhas, no longer linked to a historical life in the recent past, were thus thought of as

12. Harrison 1978, p. 43.
13. Harrison 1978, pp. 45-46.
14. Harrison 1978, pp. 46-48.
15. Harrison 1978, p. 51.
16. Harrison 1978, p. 46.
17. In its later manifestation as the so-called "illusory body" (see below), the deity's body is explicitly described as like a dream, mirage, and so on.
18. Harrison 1978, p. 52.
19. Harrison 1978, pp. 50 and 54.
20. Harrison 1978, pp. 39-40.

surrounded by retinues in real-time yet alternative dimensions more optimal than this impure world so familiar to us, such that their optimal local cultures of teaching, practice and study were globalized into entire worlds referred to as "Buddha fields" (*buddhakṣetra*).[21]

In this development of pure land discourse, we can thus see the incipient development of the tantric maṇḍala, as well as how this maṇḍala functions in part as an image and model for human culture itself, if in an idealized form. At the root of the Buddhist maṇḍala (*dkyil 'khor*) ideology, we thus find two aspects: an explicitly pedagogical resonance to the principle of the center (*dkyil*) surrounded by a periphery (*'khor*), and the investiture of absolute authority and value in the physical presence of the Teacher at center. The seeds for later ambiguities and difficulties of tantric ideology in terms of broader socio-political dynamics are thus already present during this early period, if we may be excused for inquiring into the as yet latent issue of those caught between the fields of distinct Buddhas, "each in his own world."[22] Aside from the discourse of articulating the celestial culture of Buddhas as well as their evolving configurations of interrelation, another possible source for maṇḍala ideology as well as particular gestalts lies in the arrangement, and rearrangement, of images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas upon altars for worship.[23] To return to our concern with encounter scenarios, rebirth in these new Buddhas' optimal cultures came to be an important religious goal, which techniques for contacting them greatly facilitated. Thus these new Buddhas became the object of recollection praxis, as well as objects of worship.[24] As some individuals increasingly found these practices to be a locus where something of supreme value was being worked out, they gradually evolved into a body of ritual practice that provided scripted encounters with the Buddha in which structured contemplative sequences utilizing visualization, hand gestures (*mudrā*), liturgy and repetition of special verbal formulas (*mantra*) were used to imaginatively fabricate the Buddha's physical presence.

When encounter becomes transference

This evocation or fabrication of the Buddha's bodily presence presumably underwent a series of phases, which has as of yet been only imprecisely traced. For instance, it would appear that in line with the pure land developments, the frames of reference for recollection gradually expanded to include the entire milieu of beings constellated around a given Buddha, which towards the center would include other Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, and towards the periphery more subsidiary or ancillary figures participating within his cultural configuration. However two factors seem to have to have been particularly important in these shifts advancing the practice towards status as a semi-independent vehicle of practice, symbolism and even systematic literature: (i) gradually viewing these practices as of central soteriological significance and (ii) shifting from simple encounters with the Buddha to actual self-identification with this ultimate source of authority and canonical voice. Not only was the Buddha's wisdom spirit (*ye shes*, *jñāna*) eventually understood to descend into the ritually fabricated body, thereby rendering it indistinguishable from the real Buddha, but in a move that came in many circles to constitute the defining mark of tantric Buddhism, this dynamic presence came to be appropriated as the practitioner's own revised self-identity and body-image. It was this final development that came to be known as deity yoga (*lha'i rnal 'byor*, *deva yoga*), the art of psycho-physical unification with the Buddha.

For this reason, later tantric scholars often argued that deity yoga itself was the defining mark of Buddhist tantra from beginning to end. One of the most powerfully argued positions to this effect is that of the fourteenth century Tibetan founder of the Geluk (*dge lugs*) tradition, Tsongkhapa (*Tsong kha pa*, 1357-1419), whose masterly survey of tantra, *The Great Stages of Mantra* (*sNgags rim chen mo*) has been partially

21. The notion of looking at a maṇḍala as in some sense a human culture has been thematized by Samuel 1993 in the context of Tibetan religious civilization. It is also used in a less grand, but nonetheless quite interesting fashion in Need 1993.

22. Harrison 1978, p. 39.

23. Both possibilities are discussed in Hodge 1994, pp. 61-2.

24. Harrison 1978, p. 39.

translated into English.[25] One of the most pressing issues in the text is the basis for differentiation of Mahāyāna Buddhism into two separate strands: the Pāramitā vehicle and the Mantra vehicle (i.e. tantra, or Vajrayāna). Tsongkhapa locates the key difference in the realm of "method,"[26] which in Buddhist tantra he explains as "Mantra's deity yoga – meditation on oneself as having an aspect similar to a form body."[27] He subsequently expands this to include the divine residence under the rubric of the "maṇḍala circle"[28] and explains that is the main method for a practitioner achieving the Form Body (*rūpakāya*) of a Buddha. Cozort elaborates on this method as the yoga which "causes the mind that directly (non-conceptually) realizes emptiness to appear in the form of a deity such as a Buddha."[29] This appearance of the mind eventually develops into Buddha's Form Body;[30] the mind develops into the *dharma-kāya*. Its extraordinary accomplishment is that it is a method of "uniting wisdom and method in which wisdom and method are joined together in a single consciousness";[31] in the simplest terms, you integrate meditation on a deity and on emptiness – "if one mediates both on a deity and on emptiness, it is the quick path."[32]

Tsongkhapa goes on to attempt to substantiate this by showing that the practice of deity yoga extends back to the "lowest" (and by extension in our own historical reading of these materials, earliest) strata of Buddhist tantra: the materials later codified as Kriyā and Caryā tantras.[33] He fails, however, to address the presence of non-tantric prototypes for such practice in clearly defined Buddha-encounter scripts or practices cited in the early Mahāyāna and even pre-Mahāyāna materials. In addition to the discrete details of locating this practice of visualizing and emotionally identifying one's own body-image with that of a Buddha, his broader point appears to be that tantra integrates the perception of emptiness with vivid visions of intense, fluid and divine forms, thus thinking, and experiencing, together emptiness and form, or process and structure, in a dynamic integrated manner. It is this contemplative ability to integrate two poles, that otherwise tend to diverge from each other, that is so distinctive and powerful in tantric practice, and for Tsongkhapa at least, it is the visualization of self as Buddha primarily *at the surface of one's own body* that captures this dynamic in all distinctively tantric contemplation.

It should be noted that in the context of later tantras, namely the Anuttarayoga tantras, he expands the rubric "deity yoga" to refer to "perfection phase" practices as well,[34] but even with that expanded significance of the term embracing visualizing the body's *interior* as similar in form to a Buddha's, my comments below still pertain. In this broader sense of deity yoga embracing both generation and perfection phase techniques belonging to Anuttarayoga tantra cycles, the term continues to be focused on the generation of a bodily self-image in the specific visual form of a Buddha or Bodhisattva. The rationale for including perfection phase techniques seems to be fourfold: (i) the generated self-visualization continues to be maintained throughout the subtle body practices,[35] (ii) the subtle body practices themselves aim at penetrating deeper into the embodied energy to flesh out and actualize the surface body image's transmutation, (iii) some experiences derive from previous visualization of deities even though the deities

25. Hopkins 1987 and 1987a.

26. See Hopkins 1987a, pp. 113-116, where Tsongkhapa initially presents his view of the correct basis for differentiating Mahāyāna into two distinct traditions; also see p. 132 and elsewhere. He understands these two as possessing the same view, but differing on this issue of method, pp. 133-134.

27. Hopkins 1987a, p. 116.

28. Hopkins 1987a, p. 119.

29. Cozort 1986, p. 24.

30. Cozort 1986, p. 27.

31. Cozort 1986, p. 26.

32. Hopkins 1987a, p. 129. In addition to this integration of divine form and emptiness, in later tantric movements in particular, a key is the utilization of an intensely blissful mind to realize emptiness (see Cozort 1986, p. 78).

33. Hopkins 1987a, pp. 121-122 and 129-138. The controversy as to whether Kriyā and Caryā tantras in fact involve "self-generation and entry of a wisdom-being" is directly addressed in Hopkins 1987, pp. 47-62.

34. Hopkins 1987a, p. 122.

35. Cozort 1986, p. 65.

may not appear at that point,[36] and (iii) the dissolutions of embodied energy into the heart's radiant light sparked by these manipulations ultimately issue forth in one's fundamental wind currents naturally re-materializing in the shimmering form of the deity's bodily image, which is now called the "illusory body" (*sgyu lus*, *māyādeha*) in contrast to the coarse material body.[37] For these reasons, in Tsongkhapa's view perfection phase praxis should be seen as an extension of the self-generation of oneself in the aspect of the deity: the generation phase initiates the imaginative process of transformation of one's own mind and body into that of a Buddha, while the perfection phase renders the imagination into a reality.[38] Deity yoga remains principally the transformation of one's own bodily image for that of the Buddha, *as conjoined with* the concomitant transformation of one's mind.

Although the broader rubric of two polarities might be suitable as an umbrella embracing much of later tantra, the narrower rubric of deity yoga that Tsongkhapa, as well as recent academic scholarship,[39] so forcefully highlights is problematic as the central and invariable defining characteristic of Buddhist tantra. Tsongkhapa focuses on the debatable presence of such praxis in early or "lower" tantric traditions, where at times it seems the encounter scenario alone was present without any clear indication of a principle of identification. However, in the present context I would rather look at the validity of this deity-yoga centric approach for understanding *later* tantric movements, which at least from their own perspective, are also *higher*. In other words, as I will discuss below, it can be clearly shown that some late tantric developments did not involve the practice of deity yoga and thus fall outside of Tsongkhapa's normative definition of Buddhist tantra. I should stress that Tsongkhapa's position is a very well argued one with considerable support in the Indian literature itself and was clearly at least *one* orthodox position in Indian circles in its general parameters. While these movements by their own admission often placed themselves into a third category threatening to transcend the dialectic between sūtra and tantra all together, this attempt to articulate a third doxographical space never really succeeded. Thus it is most natural to discuss these in the context of tantra, a context to which they most manifestly belong in almost every aspect, even if at times they stretch the paradigmatic boundaries within which normative scholarship tends to contain tantric discourse and practice. We will return to this issue below.

While early tantric developments focusing on encounters, and later embodying, of Buddhas and their surrounding ideal cultures can thus be seen to be growing as, and out of, one of the main streams of Mahāyāna Buddhism, it should be noted that the nature of these scenarios undergoes a gradual shift that in retrospect constitutes a striking transformation. It is these transformations that constitute the real break away identity of these strands of Mahāyāna as constituting an independent movement which raises serious questions as to its relationship to those other elements of Mahāyāna with which it once seemed to belong to a clear continuum. In brief, I would summarize this as on the one hand, (i) the displacement of the blissful

36. Cozort 1986, p. 78.

37. Eventually in the perfection phase meditations (Cozort 1986, p. 65), the visualization is said in some sources to be replaced by the subtle mind of radiant light itself meditating on emptiness, while its correlate subtle wind directly manifests in the deity's form as an "illusory body" (*sgyu lus*). The illusory body (pp. 94 ff.) is the "actual achievement of a divine body adorned with the major and minor marks" resulting from the metaphoric clear light and the fundamental wind that is its mount acting in conjunction. Out of the contemplative dissolution of all winds into the heart's indestructible nucleus (p. 98), this fluid energy re-materializes as channeled by the pattern set up via previous visualization into the fluid shimmering form of the deity. It is called "impure" (p. 95), since the practitioner has not yet completely eradicated the emotional distortions (*nyon grib*), while that appearance becomes "pure" following liberation. This pre-liberation process of the coarse material body ceasing as the fundamental mind naturally emerges in an illusory body is said to be analogous to how an intermediate state body re-manifests after death or a dream body after falling asleep (pp. 100-101). One can depart from, and re-enter, the coarse body in this stage of realization of the illusory body, since the coarse body is only completely destroyed with the total eradication of karmic energy that transpires when a *pure* illusory body is attained.

38. Cozort 1986, p. 27.

39. For example, see Snellgrove 1988, p. 1359 and Newman 1987, p. 24.

serenity of pure land culture for the violent dynamics of cremation ground culture, or the intense intimacy and blissfulness of the swinging sexualized sixties; while on the other hand, (ii) the ancient yet intermittent Buddhist intensification of rhetorical negation not only resurfaces in this context as a defining mark of tantra, but actually becomes radicalized into lifestyle negation with its ethics of active transgression.[40] The former point is simple in its outlines: the central figures of the maṇḍala encounter and deity yoga appropriation shift from serene Buddhas to male and female figures in varying postures of explicit sexual intercourse, as well as horrific figures garlanded with the skulls of children, drinking blood, and stomping on the corpses or devastated bodies of other beings, the famous Heruka.[41] Along with the shift of the center, the entire cultural milieu also shifts, as the total maṇḍala gestalt becomes either an iconographic orgy of sexual expression, or the representation of a terrifying cremation grounds culture of demons, ḍākiṇīs, corpses, cannibalism and the like. The contrast to the serene peaceful landscape of early Mahāyāna pure lands, with their optimal teaching scenarios and idyllic features, should be obvious. Not everyone found themselves at home with this new version of the Buddha encounter, with its sexualized and horrific variants of the culture a Buddha emanates outwards; the converse, of course, is also true – it is far from clear that then, or now, everyone found themselves comfortable in the politically correct and oh so regulated world of the early pure lands. While certainly Buddhist proto-tantra and early tantra had been re-absorbing tremendous amounts of ritual processes from other Indian religious traditions from an early point, this new twist apparently involved a much more controversial incorporation and adaptation of specifically Śaivite images and ideologies,[42] which seemed to push Buddhist tantra right beyond the pale in some Buddhist eyes. The intensified controversy seems to have derived from three elements in particular: the central soteriological importance of these adapted images, the striking differences they posed to the displaced Buddhist images with their valorization of iconographically and linguistically portrayed sex and violence, and the threat they seemed to pose to the regulated and celibate lifestyle of Buddhist monastic life.

Finally, hand in hand with this change in cultures, we find that tantra becomes marked by a very distinctive deconstructive rhetoric, which itself in part acted to magnify the controversial aspects of these new developments. In general, in early Mahāyāna the pure land cults and the intensely negative rhetoric of the *Prajñāpāramitā* seem to have kept their distance from each other, one offering paradisiacal realms and the other an austere vision of emptiness (*śūnyatā*), though there were attempts to bridge the distance.[43] Similarly, the earliest forms of tantra do not appear to have highlighted deconstructive language. However, with these changes to sexual and horrific iconography, we find that tantra as a discourse and practice increasingly not only incorporates such language, but radicalizes it into a distinctive and controversial style. In addition to rhetorically dismissing or devaluing much of conventional Buddhist practice and beliefs, the horrific imagery to some degree deconstructs the previous Buddhist proclivity for serene Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, while ethically a practitioner was called to actually deconstruct conventional values and conduct through a transgressive lifestyle. This thus went considerably beyond simply integrating conventional Mahāyāna ideologies of emptiness into a tantric field. In addition to this transgressive brand of deconstructive negation, as we shall see, an equally important variant of tantric negative rhetoric was to emerge in what we might term the naturalistic negation of such movements as Mahāmudrā or Atiyoga. Emphasizing a passive letting-go rather than acts of violent transgression, and a rhetoric of natural spontaneity rather than superhuman feats of control and manipulation, this latter style of tantra gave rise to a movement that claimed to go beyond deity yoga-defined tantra into new fields of play.

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40. This latter point is elaborated on in Germano 1997.

41. For this historical process of sexualization and horrification, see Snellgrove 1987, pp. 278-303 and 134-141, 152-160, 198. Among other things, he associates the former with a change from a fivefold concept of Buddhahood to a twofold one, and the latter with the rise to maṇḍala dominance of the wrathful Vajra family with Akṣobhya as its nominal head.

42. See Snellgrove 1987, pp. 152-216 and Sanderson 1985, p. 214.

The worlds within: subtle bodies

This tantric focus on encountering and identifying with the Buddha primarily though his surface body-image at some point in the history of Buddhist tantra was transformed with a radical reorientation towards the body's interior, the peri-personal space. Thus, in addition to the key tantric yogic technology of identity transference in deity yoga via visual transformation of the practitioner's body image, we find the development of a second crucial tantric yogic process: manipulations of a subtle body physiology, often in conjunction with sexual yoga. With this statement, however, I must make two immediate caveats.

Firstly, it is true that previous Buddhist practice involved various types of attention paid to the interior of the body, such as early contemplative focus on the movements of breath as well as cultivated observation of ordinarily occurring physiological sensations within the body. In these practices of mindfulness and *vipaśyanā*, then, there is a cultivation of a sense of the body's interior. However, this interior of the body was seen as a container not for other bodies, and certainly not for the divine bodies of the Buddha, but rather as literally a "sack of shit" with its assorted repugnant substances.

More importantly, early "tantric"[44] practices included limited contemplative extensions into the body's interior, as described clearly in Tsongkhapa's account of Kriyā and Caryā Yoga tantric practices.[45] These include visualizing a variety of interrelated phenomena at the deity's heart, whether the deity is visualized in front or as the deity's own body image: a lunar disc,[46] the letters of the deity's mantras appearing around the lunar disc's edge,[47] light emanating out from these letters,[48] a flame resounding with the mantra's sounds,[49] and a smaller divine body image within the heart's flames.[50] All of these visual and sonic evocations within the body are centered on the presence of the mantra in the process of deity-visualization; this is of course related to the visualization itself often beginning with a seed syllable emanating light that transforms into the deity's body.[51] The mantra lies at the heart of the deity's body as a type of sonic essence emanating out the deity's bodily form as well as representing its dynamic activity. The practice involves initially verbally reciting the mantra located within the heart, and then using the flame, body, letters and disc at the heart to move towards the mantra's self-reverberation unaided by verbal recitation. Thus it is summed up as "moon, letters, sounds,"[52] while the fire is a cool, lunar flame in striking opposition to the solar flame that later comes to dominate the tantric body's interior. Finally, these practices also involve a very limited form of wind yoga, which is explained as holding the winds while focusing on the divine body image.[53] The rationale is to withdraw the mind inside from its ordinary overly stimulated state of distraction and cathexis to external objects;[54] like the visualizations above, it thus helps to generate *śamatha* so that the mind can focus one pointedly on the appropriate contemplative object in sustained fashion. This is, of course, due to the breath and its extended meaning being thought of as intimately involved with the state of thought activity. In terms of the actual practice, it is probably similar to how a contemporary Tibetan exegete, Geshe

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43. Harrison 1978, p. 40.
44. I follow Snellgrove 1987, p. 233 in seeing this term as applying to these practices only retroactively, since in fact they appear to originally constitute the primarily ritual side of non-esoteric Mahāyāna Buddhism: "... those ritual works known later as Action and Performance tantras were originally the main ritual texts which formed part of Mahāyāna religious practice at a time when later tantras were unknown. The term kriyā ... simply means a rite of any kind. Caryā ... also means a rite of any kind."
45. Hopkins 1987.
46. Hopkins 1987, p. 141
47. Hopkins 1987, p. 144.
48. Hopkins 1987, p. 146.
49. Hopkins 1987, p. 1957.
50. Hopkins 1987, p. 159.
51. Hopkins 1987, pp. 194, 197.
52. Hopkins 1987, p. 197.
53. Hopkins 1987, p. 113.
54. Hopkins 1987, pp. 157-8.

Kelsang Gyatso, explains it in his *Tantric Grounds and Paths*:[55] the practitioner imaginatively gathers the winds, or currents of energy, in from the nine bodily gateways and skin pores through which they ordinarily ceaselessly pass in and out, so that they dissolve into the lunar disc at the heart. Holding the breath, attention is then focused therein.

As we shall see below, this limited attention to the body's interiority is strikingly different from the later developments that are the subject of this paper, though certainly it appears to be an important precursor. Despite the limited importance of wind yoga, it involves no discussions of channels in the body, through which substances are moved, or in general any version of subtle physiology which was to later become so important. The body is not thus being mapped out or explored in any systematic way; and the limited attention paid to the body's interior is done so in a way closely linked to the body surface visualization, such that it is largely reducible to the deity's mantra. This appears linked to the relationship of mantra and deity as a signifier and signified, the mantra and the deity it expresses. In standard generation phase visualization, this relationship is especially clear in the imaginative construction of the deity's body out of its seed syllable. We thus have the sequence of emptiness, vibratory sound and body image, with the extended mantric sequence reinscribed within the body image as a locus from which emanating activity stems. This clearly expresses the paradigm that the body's interiority hides what is most true or real, and may also represent a ritual counterpart to early Buddha-nature speculation. In other words, the Buddha as an indwelling presence at the heart is the ultimate agent within each individual's own existence, which it creates and sustains, even if it is then obscured within the folds of its derivatives. Of course the identity of that internal Buddha agent is a crucial and often quite obscure question. In the present context, I would like to note that the presence is largely construed as *linguistic* in nature, is centered within the heart and is focused on visual and aural phenomenon. This strikingly contrasts to the subsequent focus on vivid tactile sensations of bliss, heat and movement within the body, as well as the focus on a vertical axis of movement stretching from the genitals to the head via the heart.

With the advent of Yoga tantras, we might expect to find a greater turn towards the body's interior, given that it is often described as a turn away from external ritual towards internal contemplative processes. However, a quick reading of the presentation of Yoga tantra in Tsongkhapa's *The Great Stages of Mantra* and his disciple Khedrub Je's (*mKhas grub rje*, 1385-1438) *A General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra*[56] – both of which I consider excellent Indological works, though of course they have their own agendas – reveals the same limited types of activities within the body's interior. Of note in particular is a technique for stabilizing the mind after deity yoga, which involves contemplating a tiny vajra at the nose's tip. According to Tsongkhapa, some sources say the vajra's visualization is originally at the navel or heart, and is drawn up to the nose with the breath's movements; he also mentions tactile sensations associated with bliss in this context. At one point tiny vajras then pervade the entire body, as well as increasing in size so that they are emanated outwards and contracted back to the nose's tip. In addition, Khedrub Je mentions a moon at the heart supporting a five pronged vajra and most interestingly refers to a syllable which becomes an eight-petalled lotus at the deity's throat.[57]

The second caveat relates to issues raised by the possibility of much earlier occurrences of classic subtle body ideology and praxis in Buddhist circles. It is certainly conceivable that there were limited occurrences of this as an oral tradition of an alternative mode of practice, but even so, it is a moment of critical importance when these practices *and* ideologies become graphically inscribed in complex textual traditions. Not only does it indicate how central these practices have become at that point, but also that they have become mainstream (at least in some circles) ways in which Buddhist discourse is pursued. In other words, they not only occur in Buddhist texts, they also become themselves a new medium for pursuing Buddhist

55. Gyatso 1995, p. 33.
56. See Wayman 1980 for an edition of the Tibetan text with a preliminary translation.
57. Wayman 1980, p. 243.
58. Hopkins 1992, pp. 218-219. I am indebted to Jeffrey Hopkins for pointing out this passage to me.

textualized discourses. That I do not thereby reduce the subtle body in Buddhist tantra to a passive medium for such "inscription" should be clear from my discussion below, but it needs to be emphasized that this an important aspect.

With these two caveats in place, we are now ready to briefly look at the nature of this radical reorientation towards the body's interior which occurs in the new literature eventually grouped together and classified as the Anuttarayoga tantras. Most strikingly, in this literature we find the rise of an alternative body within the coarse body, a body with subtle physiology consisting of channels (*rtsa*, *nāḍī*), winds (*rlung*, *prāṇa*) and nuclei (*thig le*, *bindu*). Thus there is no longer simply a focus on the heart, but rather a central axis is set up that not only includes the navel and genitals, but also the head area. While the genital zone is of course notorious for its erotic dimensions, it should be noted that not only do the sexual nuclei flow from the head area, but also many techniques based on the expanded subtle body center around the head zone. It is often said that physical pliancy (*shin sbyangs*, *praśrabdhi*) can be generated anywhere in the body through the exoteric practice of calming (*zhi gnas*, *śamatha*), with the notable exception of the brain, which is thus relatively "heavier" than other parts of the body. The contemporary scholar Geshe Gedün Lodrö has speculated that the reason for this may be that a preponderance of the original paternal semen and maternal blood is concentrated in the head, with which the most fundamental psychic energy is associated.[58] It is thus only the radical techniques of tantra which work directly with these nuclei that can actually generate physical and mental pliancy in these areas. For the time being, I merely cite this interesting comment because it reflects that tantra is at least as concerned with the region of the head as it is with the genitals, despite popular misconceptions.

With this network of energy and substance flow patterns in the body, complicated new contemplative systems are articulated that manipulate these flows in ways conducive to the generation of unusual sensations and contemplative states understood to eventually culminate in a reiteration of the enlightenment experience. I think it is useful to differentiate between two different basic paradigms of these interior contemplations focused on this body within a body, though at this point I cannot offer a historical analysis of possibly separate modes of genesis. On the one hand, we find a highly sexualized paradigm explicitly modeled on sexual sensations (in many cases to the point of explicitly relying on actual sexual intercourse). This paradigm focuses on the movement of "nuclei" (semen is its coarser aspect), especially in their dripping from their lunar reservoir at the crown's thousand-petalled lotus down towards the genitals. The most well known instance of this is *Hail Vajra Tantra*'s (*Hevajra Tantra*) account of the Fierce Woman (*gtum mo*, *caṇḍālī*) practice. In brief, it involves a solar fire blazing up from the abdominal area to melt the ambrosial lunar reservoir, the downward progress of which through the cakras ignites a cascading series of ever intensifying sensations of bliss (graded into "four joys"); the practice can be done in conjunction with actual sexual intercourse or not. On the other hand, we find in *The Esoteric Assembly Tantra* (*Guhyasamāja Tantra*) exegetical literature a death-based paradigm which contemplatively mimics the dissolution of consciousness that occurs in dying and falling asleep. This highlights the body's central channel into which its winds sequentially dissolve, sparking a cascading series of altered states of consciousness accompanied by shifting experiences of light culminating in the ultimate dissolution into the heart's radiant light (*'od gsal*, *prabhāsvara*).[59] In this way, exegetical literature reinscribes these techniques and experiences into a deity yoga framework, since out of this immersion into radiant light, the divine body-as-self is understood to now inexorably re-emerge in a much more potent form than the previously fabricated visualization. In short, the practitioner's own fundamental winds now stir from the heart in the form of the deity, which is referred to as the "illusory body" (*sgyu lus*, *māyādeha*).

Both contemplative paradigms for the subtle body, which are often found integrated together, share a tendency towards a rhetoric of control and manipulation, as the body's internal currents and substances are moved around in line with the mind's agenda. In addition, we can discern a very strong focus on interiority,

59. It should be noted that in later practice these two paradigms are integrated with each other and their possible distinct origins require further historical analysis.

since all of these processes are taking place during extended sequences within the practitioner's most intimate peri-personal spaces. Thus we can see this in some sense as an extension of a directionality that begins in the pure encounter scenarios of early Mahāyāna contemplation and ritual, where the Buddha is either evoked or appears in the lived space of the practitioner. When the encounter shifts to identification and transference, most strikingly in the Yoga tantra literature, we can begin to discern a pattern by which the Buddha comes ever closer, moving inwards from the exterior. This movement is then continued further into the body's intimate cavernous hollows in subtle body praxis, where the identification is radicalized and the encounter events take place primarily *within* the practitioner's body, not in front or on its surface. The intimacy of this internal inquiry into self-as-buddha, or buddha-as-self, can be linked to the increasing centrality of sexual imagery and experience, since the sexual act is one of penetrating movement into the body's interior in more ways than one. We have thus come a long way from the externally performed ritual that by its very exteriority has interpersonal dimensions to the deeply interiorized private nature of the perfection phase practices with their focus on manipulatively centering intense experiences within the body's core.

Bodies in Bodies: phenomenology or text?

These practices begin to ritually establish not simply the presence of the Buddha, but also Buddhism's presence within the individual's body. It thus remains an open question as to the degree that this gradual interiorization functions to appropriate the unrestrained creative authority of a Buddha to the individual, or instead largely functions to appropriate the individual with body to the restrained and structured authority of a Buddhist discourse. This dialectical tension emerges in the Anuttarayoga tantra materials with the reconstruction of a Buddhist universe mapped out on the body's interior, *along with* close concern with strong emotionally laden sensations originating within the body's interior that do not have specifically Buddhist valences, as much as Buddhist tantra at times attempts to render them self-interpreting in a Buddhist voice (such as labeling semen *bodhicitta*). Snellgrove has argued that specifically tantric exegetical work only fully comes into its own at the level of the Anuttarayoga tantras, since the earlier texts were relatively clear without secondary commentary and were dependent on normative Mahāyāna sūtras in general for framing intellectual speculation.[60] Subsequently a vast body of tantra exegetical work developed since the primary texts not only now covered a wide range of materials no longer focused on mere ritual explication, but were also laden with interpretative problems due to the humor, shock rhetoric, coded language, and hermetic nature of its philosophical style's dependence on stylistic and linguistic plays.

I would add to this that descriptions and experiences relating to the subtle body thus became situated in a complex web of textualized discourses, in addition to itself constituting an alternative medium in which such discourses could be articulated. For this reason, it is naive to think these practices and discourses of the subtle body only refer to internal experiences that are closely linked to physiological sensations or even the development of reflexivity in the human nervous system. While this is undeniably an important aspect of these practices, it is also clear these bodies within the body were a contested zone between different tendencies in Buddhism *itself*. What I have in mind here are two phenomena: (i) competing Buddhist ways of representing dimensions and events in the subtle body that reflect tensions between different styles of tantric Buddhism; and (ii) a more global phenomena of the attempt in some sense to colonize the intrinsically non-denominational interior of the body and its vivid sensations with specifically Buddhist images, values and structures that reflect particular agendas and belief systems. Thus with the rise of the cult of the human body, particularly in its sexualized aspect, the body's interior becomes a key site in which the overall destiny of *Buddhism* gets played out, as well as the soteriological destiny of individual *Buddhists*.

I would like to tentatively suggest that the early location of the mantra within the body's interior – the signifier that literally embodies itself as that which it signifies – represents a preliminary Buddhist colonization of the body's interior. The mantra is the sonic essence of the Buddha image, while the

60. Snellgrove 1987, p. 270.

Buddha image itself is in many ways a visual encoding of normative Buddhist ideologies and symbols. The latter is clearly represented in the third of the three principles said to govern all generation phase praxis: vivid visualization (*gsal snang*), divine pride (*lha'i nga rgyal*) and keeping (the image's) purity in mind (*dag dran*). The latter refers to the critical importance of keeping in mind the philosophical significance of each visual detail of the image, which thus comes to be a type of iconic allegory in formation.[61] While the vivid tactile sensations of later subtle body practice partially disrupt the intrusion of Buddhist discourse into the body's interior, it also remains true that simultaneously an extensive mapping out of the body was taking place in terms of mantric particles, deity images and recapitulation of psycho-cosmogony. Thus we could perhaps suggest a certain agonistic element in the body's interior, where we find a dialectical tension between the corpus of Buddhist discourse inscribed on the body's passive medium, and the active lived bodies of Buddhist practitioners asserting their own peculiarly embodied languages within Buddhist discourse. Such a tension in non-Buddhist contexts has been described in a variety of recent studies, such as Thomas Csordas's *Embodiment and Experience*, where he contrasts the body as an object as for contemporary technological medicine and conventional biological science to the body as the subject of sensation, experience and world.[62] This is further related to the body as a passive text or matrix on which social reality and mental representations are inscribed that are amenable to semiotic analysis, in contrast to the body as an active subject which primordially and creatively participates in human culture in ways demanding phenomenological inquiry. I believe a variant of this tension was a central one in late Indian and early Tibetan Buddhism contemplative attention to the body's interiorities and exteriorities, and not simply a contemporary debate projected back into a distorted past. I will briefly return to this suggestion at the paper's end.

PART 2: BUDDHAS, SKIES AND INTER-SUBJECTIVE BODIES IN ATIYOGA COSMOGONY AND CONTEMPLATION

Skies as self

The specific subject of my paper is the transformations of these tantric paradigms and directions effected by the Seminal Heart (*snying thig*) tradition of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*). I will focus my comments and citations on the tradition's original corpus of eleventh century revelations (claiming to be eighth century translations of non-Tibetan originals) that came to be redacted as *The Seventeen Tantras*.[63] This formed the basis of a set of twelfth century Tibetan revelations largely attributed to eighth century Indian figures, which came to be codified as *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra*;[64] these both in turn formed the basis for the

61. Beyer 1973, pp. 80-81.

62. Csordas 1994, p. 8. See Thomas Csordas's introduction to his *Embodiment and Experience* (Csordas 1994, pp. 1-24) for an account of this debate within anthropological circles. I am grateful to David Need for drawing my attention to this article.

63. Newman dates *The Wheel of Time Tantra*'s formal redaction to 1012 following possible low profile preliminary forms (see Newman 1985, p. 65). The Seminal Heart tradition itself dates its inception to India prior to the ninth century, though its emergence into the open only occurs in the eleventh century as revealed Tibetan-language "treasure" texts (*gter ma*) in Tibet. I have argued elsewhere (Germano 1994) that *The Seventeen Tantras* were largely composed in their present forms by Tibetans in the eleventh century, though literary, oral and practical roots may stretch back much earlier with possible links to India, Central Asia and China. Since there was tremendous contact between Northern India and Tibet right through this time period, the question of historical points of connection remains open. While the tradition has often been accused of being quite un-Buddhist, in fact it can be shown that it belongs firmly to the continuum of Buddhist discourses and practices of its time *outside* of Tibet. However questions of possible direct influences by Chinese Taoism and so forth, particularly in its distinctive contemplation of light images and intricate cosmogonic discourses, remain.

64. As discussed at length in Germano 1994 and Germano (unpublished), this literature also claims to date to the eighth century. However, I argue that its formal composition took place largely in the twelfth century, with particular elements deriving from possibly earlier sources (see above).

tradition's next major literary developments, namely the fourteenth century *The Seminal Heart of the Sky Dancer* attributed to Padmasambhava[65] and the indigenous corpus of Longchenpa (*klong chen rab 'byams pa*, 1308-1363). The tradition's highly original syncretic innovations proved to be highly influential in Tibet, and in particular came to dominate the Atiyoga tradition. I will argue that in its contemplative practice and associated discourses it overturned what were arguably the two defining features of classic Buddhist tantra in India, at least as represented by the Anuttarayoga tantras: (i) the practice of deity yoga as a prescribed visualization of one's own body image as that of a Buddha and (ii) the cult of the subtle body with its tones of manipulation and deep interiorization of the soteriological drama.

In order to understand this transformation, we must briefly outline the nature of contemplative praxis in this tradition. While the tradition integrated a wide variety of classic perfection phase techniques into its path structure as *ancillary* or *preliminary* contemplations, it leaves practically no space at all for classical deity yoga visualizations. Later fourteenth century collections do generally include sādhanas as well as standard preliminary practices such as Vajrasattva meditation or Guru Yoga, but their structural position in the overall system remains generally peripheral. Its two central contemplative systems are unique to the tradition and initially appear to be quite different from normative deity yoga or subtle body techniques: the practice and associated preliminaries for the breakthrough (*khregs chod*) and direct transcendence (*thod rgal*) respectively. The former is framed by radically deconstructive rhetoric which positions Prajñāpāramitā-style contemplation of emptiness within a tantric discursive field emphasizing letting-go and spontaneity. In its main practice, it is thus devoid of analytical styles of deconstruction and focuses instead on the natural flow of appearances that fill one's field of experience when intellectual attempts at control and manipulation are surrendered. It is the second practice, however, that is crucial in the current context. In short, this practice involves using light sources (a sun, moon or lamp), or a specially prepared completely dark retreat room, in order to generate spontaneous flows of light imagery, which *of their own accord* gradually begin to take shape in the *external* field of the practitioner's vision as maṇḍalas of Buddhas. These maṇḍalas gradually take the shape of the set of "one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities" found in *The Nucleus of Mystery Tantra* (*Guhyagarbha Tantra*) in four visionary phases (*snang ba bzhi*). The first three phases involve the light images increasing in complexity, extent and pattern, while the fourth phase entails the dissolution of all images into the state of non-manifest enlightenment (termed "swirling into the single expanse"). The following passage from *The Tantra of Unimpeded Sound* is a terse description of how this imaginal process unfolds and refolds in four phases:[66]

> (i) The vision of reality's immediacy
> Emerges through the gateway of the (visual) faculties,
> And it is thus radiant within the cloudless sky.
>
> (ii) In the intensifying manifestation of experiences (vision)
> The colors of primordial gnoses are brought forth externally,
> And thus shine within the objective sphere of coarse appearances
> In vertical lines and horizontal beams of light,
> Nuclei, and the various Bodies of Buddhas within them.
>
> (iii) The vision of awareness' optimization:
> From out of the indeterminate rainbow colors
> Shining in the Enjoyment Body's characteristics and exemplary forms,
> The five spiritual families manifest in terms of the Father-Mother consort pairs.

65. As I argue in Germano (unpublished), it would appear clear that this text *as a composition* in no way dates back to Padmasambhava as a historical figure or even earlier than its fourteenth century "discovery" in Tibet. However, it does represent an important linkage of the Seminal Heart tradition to the increasingly central cult of Padmasambhava in Tibet.

66. Ab vol. 1, 193.5 ff. Since there are almost no translations into English of these materials, I have chosen to give several lengthy citations to give readers a sense of the text's self-presentation.

(iv) In this vision of exhaustion within reality
The manifestation of meditative experiences is emptied out,
And thus your body is exhausted and sensory objects as well become exhausted;
Having become free from the distorting host of notions,
You are beyond words operating as the basis for expression.

The important facets of this practice are that (i) there is no prescribed visualization that alters or controls the flow of spontaneous light imagery; (ii) there is never any suggestion that the practitioner manipulate this flow of imagery so as to direct it towards a transformation of his or her own body image into that of the deity; (iii) there is no manipulation of winds and substances within the subtle body's conduits *inside* the body of which these images are derivative; and (iv) the visions climax in the entire *external* sky being pervaded with maṇḍalas of Buddhas, at which point it all fades away into the final enlightenment, which is itself an absence.

Parallels in the dark

Before proceeding to talk about the metaphysiology and cosmogony that underlie these contemplative processes, I would like to briefly discuss the different settings for this practice in light of possible parallels to *The Wheel of Time Tantra* (*Kālacakra Tantra*). The practice itself comes to be known as "direct transcendence" (*thod rgal*, **vyutkrānta[ka]*, *vyutkartaka*, *avaskanda[ka]* or *viṣkandaka*), a term which is attested in at least five of *The Seventeen Tantras*.[67] It occurs in almost identical form in Great Perfection texts belonging to the Tibetan Bonpo tradition,[68] a religious tradition deeply immersed in Buddhist discourses and practices yet maintaining a very distinctive non-Buddhist historiographical tradition of its origins, as well as an unusually wide formal incorporation of "popular" traditions. One such Bonpo text, namely *The Experiential Transmission of Drugyelwa* attributed to Drugyelwa (*Bru rje rgyal ba g.yung drung*, 1242?-1290?), gives a particularly clear threefold division of the settings in which these light visions can be practiced: gazing within a specially prepared dark room, gazing at the daytime sky with one's back to the sun, and gazing indirectly at the sun's rays.[69] The text makes clear that these three are considered as sequential phases, with progression to be done only when one has mastered the previous phase.[70] Subsequently Drugyelwa describes the sun gazing as an "enhancing technique" (*bogs 'don thabs*) to be used only briefly and occasionally, since practicing it constantly can upset the body.[71] In *The Seventeen Tantras*, however, it would seem the emphasis is instead on sun-gazing and in fact I have been unable to locate even one unambiguous reference to a dark retreat (*mun mtshams*); however, it is discussed explicitly in *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra* and in at least the fourteenth century we find the conjunction of the rubrics "sky yoga" and "dark retreat" in Longchenpa's *The Treasury of Words and Meanings*.[72]

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67. *The Tantra of the Pointing Out Introduction*, *The Six Spaces Tantra*, *The Garland of Precious Pearls Tantra*, *The Tantra of Overflowing Preciousness*, and *The Self-Emerging Perfection Tantra*.

68. The correspondences between the two traditions go right down to the terminological details, such that there can be no doubt they share a common genesis. The current state of research does not allow for accurate dating of early Bonpo texts, thus inhibiting comparative studies.

69. See pp. 617.3-621.1, 621.3-624.5 and 624.5 ff. respectively. Also see Levin 1988 for a contemporary phenomenological diary of a dark retreat.

70. Pp. 621.6 and 625.1.

71. P. 628.5.

72. Relevant word searches (*mun khang*, *mun mtshams*; *rgya mtsho ar gtad*, *rgya mtsho['i] rnal sbyor*) turned up nothing in *The Seventeen Tantras*, and Longchenpa's commentarial works lack any clear citations of these tantras on this issue. The tantras instead have basically two types of passages which Longchenpa, at least, attempts to explicate as involving the dark retreat in his brief discussion in *The Treasury of Words and Meanings* (pp. 282.6-285.1). The first type involves applying pressure to the eyes or neck to stimulate visions of concentric lights termed "nuclei" (*thig le*, *bindu*) which tend to initially be reddish (see *The Tantra of Unimpeded Sound*, pp. 131-2, and *The Blazing Lamp Tantra*, p. 305). However, none of the relevant passages mention anything at all about darkness, and

At any rate, the point of this digression in the current context is that *The Wheel of Time Tantra* tradition has a similar nomenclature in its division of practice into "night-time and day-time yogas." The night-time yoga,[73] also termed "the yoga of space," can be done in a special dark room[74] and involves to a limited degree spontaneous imagery. These images reflect the dissolution of winds into the central channel and are codified into a set of ten signs (*rtags bcu*) that are an extension of *The Esoteric Assembly Tantra's* classic series of eight visual manifestations occurring within perfection phase praxis. Divided up into four night and six daytime signs,[75] they resemble the following visual phenomena: smoke, mirage, fireflies, a butter lamp's flame, the planet Kālāgni (like the sun or destructive fire at the end of a great aeon), the sun, moon, a dark eclipse (*rāhu*), lightening and a blue nucleus. An eleventh and culminating sign is the appearance of the deity *Wheel of Time* and consort Viśvamātā within that blue nucleus, similar to the appearance of deity images within nuclei in direct transcendence practice. These eleven signs are then stabilized by further practice.[76] However, the central practices utilize extensive visualization and classic perfection phase techniques that are focused on the body's interior. The daytime yoga, on the other hand, is done outside with one's back to the sun.[77] However, it involves similar contemplative techniques focusing on visualization and the body's interior. While the two sets of practices thus differ in detail,[78] the strikingly similar nomenclature of "darkness" and the "sky," the practice of contemplation in a specially prepared dark interior, and the valorization of non-visualized Buddha images raises the question of possible interaction between the two systems in or out of Tibet.

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associated word searches turn up no other references to such techniques. The setting in the tantras themselves suggests instead that these pressing techniques are simply used to introduce a practitioner to the presence and reality of the visions of divine light upon which the central practice of direct transcendence (*thod rgal*) is based.

The second set of passages (*The Six Spaces Tantra*, p. 209) specifically deal with a yoga of the "four times" that involves manipulation of luminous nuclei in the dark. However there is no reference to it as being part of a practice with any of the names later associated with the dark retreat, and it is not presented as culminating in deity images that evolve out of the initial presence of nuclei. That said, it may have been something that was gradually conjoined with the practice of direct transcendence, if this silence suggests that the initial practice was done outdoors, and that the dark practices only emerged subsequently in the Seminal Heart. Two other descriptions of the practice by Longchenpa also fail to cite any relevant scriptural descriptions of the practice (see *The Seminal Quintessence of the Master*, vol. 2, pp. 251.4 ff.) and *The Seminal Quintessence of the Profound*, vol. 1, pp. 257.4 ff.). The first explicit literary discussion of the practice in the tradition and the source of the standard label for the practice – "the guidance on darkness which concentrates the ocean (i.e. the eyes)" (*rgya mtsho ar gtad kyi mun khrid*) – appears to be a series of five works classified under the rubric of the "one hundred and fourteenth esoteric precept" in *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra* (vol. 3, "da," pp. 1-46). The first four texts are attributed to the eight century Indian Mañjuśrīmitra as translated by Kawa Peltsek (sKa ba dpal brtsegs, last half of eighth century) and Vimalamitra. While the first, second and fourth of these texts refer to the pressing technique and frequently to the rubric "concentration" (*ar gtad*) with which the dark retreat comes to be identified (a term totally absent from *The Seventeen Tantras* themselves), only the third text clearly discusses doing this at nighttime. However, it is only the fifth text – which lacks any colophon specifying an author – that clearly lays out the entire practice as an "enhancing technique for direct transcendence." It is unclear to me at this time whether this indicates that the practice itself was only imported gradually from an alternative Atiyoga lineage such as the *yang ti*, or whether the obscure references in *The Seventeen Tantras* indicate it may have existed as a very secret oral tradition that was only written up subsequently.

73. Dhargyey 1985, pp. 133-148.
74. Dhargyey 1985, p. 134 and Cozort 1986, p. 124.
75. Dhargyey 1985 and Cozort 1986, p. 125.
76. Cozort 1986, p. 126.
77. Dhargyey 1985, pp. 150-153.
78. Longchenpa's *The Wish-Fulfilling Treasury* (p. 561.7) refers in an ecumenical fashion to the dark yoga (*mun pa'i rnal 'byor*) as practiced by the Anuttarayoga tantra six-limbed yoga (*yan lag drug gi rnal 'byor*, *ṣaḍaṅgayoga*) *and* the Seminal Heart, saying that in both the yogic concentration of the five internal winds manifests for the practitioner in terms of visions of the distorted experiences of the six types of living beings.

The heart to eyes connection

The Seminal Heart literature articulates a traditional Buddhist subtle body scheme of three channels, four cakras and a standard range of winds and nuclei as the background for understanding the dynamics of the direct transcendence. However, the three channels never form an object of directed contemplative exercises of any type. In fact, they are largely irrelevant to the practice with one critical exception: an extraordinary addition to the basic template involving a thin channel of pure light that runs, most importantly, from the heart up to *and out of* the two eyes. In general, the basic Buddhist template for the body within a body consists of three channels termed the "flavor" (*ro ma, rasanā*), "solitary" (*rkyang ma, lalanā*) and "all-encompassing" (*kun 'dar ma, avadhūtī*) or "central" (*dbus ma*) channels, which are located in the torso's right side, left side and center respectively; four particularly important branching sites of those channels, the so-called "wheels" (*'khor lo, cakra*) located at the head, throat, heart and navel (with the genitals often added as a fifth); and a series of winds and nuclei that course through these conduits. The Seminal Heart variation on this template is to locate the forty two peaceful deities within the heart and the fifty eight wrathful deities within the head, as well as add a more subtle network of light channels (*'od rtsa*) within the sheaths of the ordinary channels. As we shall see, these variations are crucial elements in providing a conceptual support to the tradition's innovative styles of tantric praxis. *The Tantra of Self-Arising Awareness* describes this network of light thus:[79]

> The wisdom of the ultra-pure Buddhas
> Resides in the manner of Spiritual Bodies and primordial gnoses,
> In the inner being of all sentient beings.
>
> To expand on this, it exists within their *tsitta*'s (i.e. the heart) center
> In the size of a mustard or sesame seed,
> Perfectly complete without any development-as-such.
>
> The *tsitta*'s four gateways are unobstructedly radiant:
> They bring about the ongoing shining forth,
> The ongoing dissolving,
> The instantaneous shining forth,
> And the instantaneous dissolving (of radiant light).
>
> Furthermore, the articulation of their names is like this:
> The great *kati* golden channel,
> The crystal tube with hollow interior,
> The white silk thread/slender coil,
> And the great naturally free empty channel.
>
> These four gateways are the channels for primordial gnosis's natural self-presencing:
> Emerging onto the path from the heart, the gnostic light dissolves into the *avadhūtī*,
> And from within the *avadhūtī*, the light emanates outwards;
> Having emerged onto the pathway through the right side of the vertebrae,
> It dissolves from the right small extremities (channel) into the conch shell house (i.e. the skull).
>
> Light then emanates from that (through the eyes), and the four lamps
> Are present within the unobstructed empty sky
> As Spiritual Bodies of light, vividly lucent and intensely clear,
> In the manner of linked chains.

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79. Ab vol. 1, p. 526.2.

The four lamps are like this:
The lamp of empty seminal nuclei,
The lamp of awareness' expanse,
The lamp of self emergent insight,
And the lamp of far ranging water,
Which exist within all sentient beings.

The basic ideological import of this network of light is the tradition's resolute emphasis on Buddha-nature, which it sees as chiefly resident within the heart as it creates ordinary psycho-physical existence from within, rather than the other way around. Thus in contrast to the "indestructible nucleus" (*mi shigs pa'i thig le*) locked away in the heart spoken of in many representations of the subtle body in Anuttarayoga tantra material, the presence of this Buddha-nature is an active agency stretching throughout the body, as well as connecting the individual's most intimate heart with the exterior fields of perception.

It is this light channel then which leads from the mandalic Buddha-identity of radiant light (*'od gsal*) at the heart to the eyes and thus out into the field (*dbyings, dhātu*) of experience, where the internal light undergoes various transformations *externally* within the field of vision. In fact, vision is exclusively stressed in this practice, unlike the strong aural and tactile orientation of many perfection phase techniques (though sound is extremely important in its preliminary practices and I would argue that the breakthrough involves a felt sense of the body's gravity). This heart to eyes connection is almost exclusively stressed, such that the genitals and navel are basically irrelevant, as is the paradigmatic movement of ambrosial substances *from* the crown cakra down the central channel. Thus sexuality is markedly de-emphasized, which is amplified rhetorically by criticism of sexually-based yoga, whether it relies on sexual intercourse or interior contemplative reenactment of erotic sensations. This again reverses an element of increasing importance in the history of Buddhist tantra, which climaxes with the Yoginī tantras' central valorization of sexual yoga, iconographic dependence upon divine couples having sexual intercourse, and representation of the body's interior as dominated by a head to genitals axis. The following quote from *The Tantra of Unimpeded Sound* clearly contrasts sexual yogic practices with the luminous visions of direct transcendence by characterizing the former as lower practices working with "conventional" nuclei (*thig le, bindu*), while the latter are portrayed as superior techniques centered on the "ultimate" nuclei:[80]

Since you desire to rely on the reality of seminal nuclei,
(I will discuss the contemplative techniques)
Relating to the ultimate and conventional (seminal nuclei).

(i) Those who for the time being desire Buddhahood
In reliance upon the conventional seminal nuclei should do as follows:

Your consort should have the complete requisite characteristics –
When you spot one with the perfect characteristics
Whether she be a goddess, demigoddess, Brahmin caste,
Low caste, or a heretic,
You begin with the techniques for attracting her,
And then you must perfect your bodies
Via the object of reliance (i.e. consort), the channels,
And the focus of visualization (i.e. the seminal nuclei, and so forth).

Then, you must bring the conventional seminal nuclei down, retain them, reverse them (back upwards)
Disperse them within the channels, and mix them with the winds;
You then must rely upon emptiness, eradicate your intellect,
And reverse your ordinary body and mind.

80. Ab vol. 1, p. 63.3. In the tantra, it is presented as the reply to the thirty fourth question of the first chapter: "What are the aspects of the seminal nuclei like?"

(ii) On the other hand, through reliance upon the ultimate seminal nuclei
You can meet with the objects of the empty Reality Body (*chos sku, dharmakāya*):
Stimulating the lamp of the empty seminal nuclei (i.e. direct transcendence practice)
You train on awareness' efflorescent dynamics,
And when you finally gain deep attunement such that (their luminosity
Is vividly clear) without ordinary distinctions between daytime and nighttime,
These (luminous nuclei) directly manifest without any exertion on your part –
This is the measure indicating experiential mastery (of this practice).

In fact, as far as I can determine, this is the only passage in the entire set of *The Seventeen Tantras* that explicitly describes sexual yogic techniques; the associated rubric "Fierce Woman" (*gtum mo, caṇḍālī*) doesn't even occur once. *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra* has a more extensive discussion in a short text seemingly attributed to Vimalamitra,[81] but its title clearly indicates the attitude expressed towards these practices: "Esoteric Precepts for Taking Care of Those Whose Access to the Spiritual Family is Blocked." A concluding comment also makes it perfectly clear that describing these techniques is for the yogically dysfunctional.[82] It is only in the fourteenth century *The Seminal Heart of the Sky Dancer* and in Longchenpa's corpus that extensive discussions of these practices appear, in which context they are still explicitly identified as lower order practices to be used only as auxiliaries.

In addition, the direct transcendence's practice and representations of the body contrast strikingly to another important tantric technique that focuses on movement out of the body, namely the "transference" of consciousness (*'pho ba*). In this practice, which is in effect a rehearsal for the eventuality of a sudden death, one's consciousness is imaged as a ball or syllable of light which is impelled up and down the central channel from the heart to its upper opening at the top of the head. In fact, this paradigm is an ancient one, since this context of death focused on the heart to head connection is perhaps the most common context in the early Upaniṣads in which subtle physiology is first referred to in Indian discourse. In this Buddhist tantric discourse, consciousness *only* truly departs through this gateway at death itself, when it is blasted out of the top of the skull; furthermore, the entire process involves controlled visualization.

Thus I believe the significance of this revised subtle physiology supporting this innovative transformation of both generation and perfection phase technologies is, at least from its own perspective, that it overcomes the long history of ever increasing interiorization in Buddhist tantra, with the attendant solipsism of focus on the surface appearance and deep interior reaches of one's own body. In this obsessive concern with transformations happening within and as one's self, it could be argued that there is a danger that the practitioner never escapes the circular loops of self-as-deity to the outside world. By undercutting this tendency towards increasing interiority (Buddha encounter to identity transference to subtle bodies) and focusing on awareness' radiation (*rig pa'i gdangs*) moving out through the eyes into the sky rather than visions *within* the body, we can perhaps see a valorization of inter-subjectivity, of going out of self into the external fields which are both self-constituted and self-constituting. This movement also goes beyond deity yoga, which is explicit in the tradition's own rhetoric, instead of which it reinstitutes the *spontaneous* encounter scenario *out in front* of the practitioner in a form very similar to the early Mahāyāna practices detailed in the *Pratyutpanna Sūtra*. However there are crucial differences in the nature and significance of the encounter, such that it does not simply constitute a regression to practices preceding the codification of the transfer of self-identity and body image. While in early Mahāyāna pure land cults the Buddha was often understood as a gnostic force suddenly appearing from without, a moment later ritualized in generation stage practice as the "descent of gnosis," in direct transcendence the Buddhas are instead explicitly and viscerally understood as flowing outwards *from within*. In this way, it is not an encounter to which the practitioner is subordinated, but rather s/he is integrated into an interdependent pattern that traverses interior and exterior spaces, such that internal awareness (*rig pa*) is interlaced in the expanse of external space (*dbyings*). Such a

81. See VNT vol. 1, pp. 360.4-373.4, and 369.2-373.4 in particular.
82. VNT vol. 1, pp. 372.5 ff.

movement is prefigured in the *Pratyutpanna Sūtra*, when the answer to the question as to the origin and destination of these Buddha images points back to the practitioner's own mind. However, the tantric physiology and Buddha-nature ideology of the Seminal Heart tradition provides a far more visceral body-based sensation of the indwelling source of the apparitions of Buddhas beyond mere rhetorical attributions to the mind's projective capacity. In addition, the Seminal Heart – via its pervasive tantric imagery, concepts and syntax – is explicitly situated within the fields of tantric discourse and praxis, which gives its elements a much different valence within the history of those traditions than the formally identical element situated within the quite different fields of early Mahāyāna discourse and praxis. In other words, it must be understood in dialogical relationship to Buddhist tantra's intensifying tendency towards interiority, its strong control rhetoric, and its iconic focus on self-as-Buddha. This is the proper context in which to understand the persistent claim of the own tradition to represent a post-tantra movement.

This dual branched channel of light is thus the escape conduit by which the tradition overcomes both deity yoga and standard subtle body practice, thereby throwing the practitioner into external fields of vision in the surrounding world and minimizing the danger of tantric focus on the individual self isolated from the interdependent processes that constitute it. Rather than thinking of oneself as a singular Buddha, the practitioner surrenders self-identity to pluralized fields of Buddhas of which s/he is part in immense visions stretching across the sky, not minute intricate maṇḍalas located in a tiny sphere within the body's interior. To refer back to Tsongkhapa's principle of deity yoga as the defining mark of all tantra, one can immediately see how this normative definition is rendered problematic. In addition to the earlier stages of the Great Perfection and affiliated movements which rhetorically rejected cultivated visualizations along with many other Buddhist standards, we thus have here a reformulation of contemplative focus on Buddha images, rather than a simple rejection. One could attempt to modify the principle, as Tsongkhapa himself expands it to include subtle body praxis in the Anuttarayoga tantras, but I think in doing so the entire rationale would unravel. One's "self" endowed with the Form Body of a Buddha would need to include this exteriorized self, and not just the outlines of the body, while the line between self-generation and generation-in-front would be irretrievably blurred.

Release, death and contemplative recreation

The stress on spontaneous imagery also undercuts the strong tantric emphasis on control, manipulation and regimentation. Certainly non-programmed light imagery is present in other tantric practices, but I know of no other case in which it appears externally, takes the shape of Buddhas *and* is *the* central defining contemplative process of the tradition in question without in any way being coordinated with visualization. Aside from not existing within a tantric discursive field, the early Mahāyāna practice of vision quests appears to utilize visualization to initiate the visions and it is unclear if there is any graduated process involving extended sequences of light images that only very slowly take the shape of Buddhas. Direct transcendence's undercutting of the rhetoric of control is also reflected in the absence of any focus on confining of energies in the body's center, a defining paradigm of late Buddhist tantric practice in India. This is replaced by a effortless expansion outwards in contemplation of the column of light naturally running up the body's center. While I quote from Longchenpa's fourteenth century *Treasury of Spiritual Systems*,[83] his comments clearly reflect the basic thrust of the much earlier *Seventeen Tantras*:

> The lower secret mantra (systems) hold that by inserting the wind-mind energies of your solitary and flavor channels (i.e. right and left) into the central channel, a primordial gnosis of bliss, clarity and non-conceptuality will emerge, which they identify as innate (gnosis). However in fact this in no way reverses your ordinary eight fold consciousness based on the universal ground (*kun gzhi, ālaya*): the blissful sensation is due to the ordinary egoic psyche (*yid, manas*) and the emotionally distorted psyche (*nyon yid, kliṣñamanas*), while the lack of conceptuality in the undivided lucency

83. Pp. 382.1-383.3. See Dudjom 1991, pp. 40-341 for a translation of his abridged account, which is primarily a reworded presentation of Longchenpa's comments.

> is the universal ground. The slight clarity and lucency (they experience) is the universal ground consciousness, while that which appears in terms of the individual five types of coarse sensory objects and cognitive faculties (such as visible forms and sounds) are the five sensory modes of consciousness. Yet if those (modes of consciousness) are not reversed, you won't become free of cyclic existence, since you are manifestly not free from the mind-sets of cyclic existence. Since this style of practice is not different from that outlined in the Sāṃkhya scriptures [he cites a passage from therein...], they don't accomplish freedom from the mind-state of the formless meditative states (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*).
>
> They hold that the joy of mixing the channels, winds and seminal nuclei into a single flavor is the pristine dimension (*rnal ma*), and thus believe that the respective enlightened qualities manifest by force of liberating the corresponding channel-knots as the winds and seminal elements enter the central channel from the flavor and solitary channels. Thus there are many obstacles – as the winds enter the channel-petals energetically corresponding to the various six types of living beings, many delusory appearances manifest. In this way it constitutes the key point of why deviation comes to pass (for such practitioners).
>
> Since in the context (of Great Perfection contemplation) the winds are left to naturally calm down of their own accord, there is no insertion into the central channel. When the wind currents of the individual channel petals become naturally purified, the gnostic winds of the luminous channel shine of their own accord in their own state. Thus there is a lighting-up of primordial gnosis as there manifests such visions as the Spiritual Bodies, lights, and pure realms, while no distorted appearances at all manifest. As the luminous channel in the center intensifies, the channel-knots sequentially pass into light and are free – this is what we assert. The enlightened qualities of the (Bodhisattva) stages manifest in a self-presencing way. To expand on that, by force of the first two channel-knots becoming liberated into light, twelve hundred Buddha realms manifest within the luminosity that lights up externally...
>
> This is thus exceedingly superior to the level of the lower vehicles. If your mind is of cyclic existence when you practice, the result will be cyclic existence... Since (the Great Perfection) is free of the mind-sets of cyclic existence via the path, this is the key point of rapidly arriving right at the fruit. Nowadays those who desire Buddhahood from the ordinary mind don't understand this key point, and thus don't know the real path – primordial gnosis and the mind substantially contradict each other...

In addition to not being based on a recreation of sexual excitement, since it is not centered on the manipulative dissolution of the body's winds into the central channel, it also does not contemplatively mimic the elements' dissolution understood to occur in the process of dying. Such mimicking is in fact one of the defining characteristics of late Buddhist tantric contemplation, such as in *The Esoteric Assembly Tantra*'s exegetical tradition:[84] through different subtle body techniques, all of the psycho-physical currents of energy ("winds") are confined to the central channel, such that they dissolve into the person's ultimate identity as the heart's "indestructible nucleus" (*mi shigs pa'i thig le*) of the most subtle winds and mind. This recreation of the event of dying as the collapse of all structure into the body's deep interior results in the manifestation of "radiant light" (*'od gsal, prabhāsvara*), a psychic state utilized to realize emptiness and thereby reshape one's body image into the illusory body (*sgyu lus, māyādeha*) of a Buddha. Geshe Sopa summarizes this paradigm in the following terms as governing most Anuttarayoga tantras, with the significant exception of *The Wheel of Time Tantra*:[85] "The fundamental basis of purification (i.e. death, intermediate state, and birth), the path (i.e., the cultivation of the union of illusory body and clear light) and the final result (i.e. the three bodies)... enlightenment is often achieved not in the current life but in the intermediate state." *The Wheel of Time Tantra* is distinctive in *not* taking the intermediate state as one of its bases of contemplative

84. Sopa 1983, pp. 52-54.
85. Sopa 1983, p. 54.

purification, but instead using[86] the outer and inner wheels of time as set forth in its own texts – the former a cosmology of the external universe and the latter a meta-physiological representation of the body's subtle interior. I would like to point out that these roughly contemporaneous systems (eleventh centuries) not only share unusual divergences from many of the standard contemplative paradigms governing tantric Buddhism at that time, but also intricate cosmogonic discourses that are interwoven with those contemplative systems (see below).

While the Seminal Heart tradition is not driven by the logic of sexuality, it must be pointed out that unlike *The Wheel of Time Tantra* (relatively speaking), it *is* obsessively centered around the phenomena of death, the second of the twin pillars of late Indian Buddhist tantra. In fact it is the original source of the syncretic transformation of Indian Buddhist discourses about the intermediate state (*bar do*, *antarābhāva*) which later became so famous in the derivative fourteenth century revelations of Karma Lingpa (Kar ma gling pa, 1327-1387) known in English-language circles as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.[87] However, while its account of the process of dying is generally similar to the accounts in *The Esoteric Assembly Tantra* literature, on which it is surely indirectly based, the tradition's contemplative utilization of the events of dying, death and post-death are strikingly different from that literature's paradigms. To begin with, the practice of direct transcendence involves a release or letting-go (*cog bzhag*) represented by the breakthrough contemplation, which itself is structurally parallel to the process of dying. However, this recreation of dying occurs by releasing discursive control of experience and allowing the breakthrough/down to happen, rather than forcefully reenacting death within the body's interior through manipulation of winds. This death – as incarnated in the contemplative surrender of control and manipulation – immediately initiates an unfolding of images rather than a collapse or withdrawal. In other words, it allows a self-presentation (of the indwelling Buddha-nature) to take place that stems from the body's deep interior, but which from the start manifests in *external* space. After an extended process of allowing images to flow out and gradually constellate into very diverse shapes and patterns, the entire contemplation finally climaxes with dissolution, a dissolution *of* the images across the sky which is understood to mark the attainment of enlightenment. This can be contrasted to a coercively initiated withdrawal of winds *from* exteriority that sparks a controlled dissolution *into* the body's deep interior, a process which yields an unfolding illusory body only *after* this extended process of forced dissolution into the body's interior. Thus we can discern many differences-in-similarity on the registers of release and control, dissolution and unfolding, and perhaps most importantly, exteriority and interiority.

In fact, the direct transcendence praxis is understood to recreate the scenario of *post*-death experience (*bar do*) rather than the process of dying's systemic collapse. Furthermore the entire characterization of post-death events is extensively transformed in this body of literature to involve a systematic self-presentation of the peaceful and wrathful Buddhas in the vast stretching skies that confront the revived consciousness following death. The clearest account is found in *The Tantra of the Sun and Moon's Intimate Union*, which is devoted to the subject of dying, post-death and rebirth:[88]

> The "dissolution of individuals' consciousness into radiant light": the instant your external and internal breath's circulation is cut off, the manifestation of things via your own sensory faculties is absent, yet the feeling they are present persists – while your corporeal body is un-manifest, you are radiantly clear in a body of light.
>
> At this time everything that comes into your scope of sensory lights-up as maṇḍalas of five colored light rays. Moreover, if looked at from without, these manifestations are internally radiant, and if looked at from within, they are externally radiant; they are a totally unimpeded transparency without externality or internality. They resemble water quivering at the point of overflow – if

86. Sopa 1983, p. 56.
87. The full cycle is actually entitled *The Profound Doctrine of Wisdom's Natural Freedom (in Encountering) the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*.
88. Ab vol. 3, p. 221.1.

> pressed they seem to cave in, and if raised they seem to leap upwards. These appearances are extremely captivating, their extraordinarily brilliant colors are distinct without any mixing, they are naturally radiant, and their uniformly symmetrical radiance is unceasing.
>
> If you properly gaze at the lights' ultra-purity, they are exceedingly subtle, flickering, vibrating, throbbing, and naturally lustrous with their intense brilliance. Their manifestation is exceedingly vast to an extent that can't be fathomed, their lofty heights are such that it is termed "the vast peak," and these rainbow colored lights are present as the source of all the maṇḍalas.

The visions, made possible only by death's dissolution, are further described in the same text thus:[89]

> Furthermore there is "the dissolution of the individual's radiant light within integration": those rainbow colored appearances naturally arise in the aspect of the Spiritual Bodies, and those Bodies are similar in dimensions without any being larger or smaller, including ornaments, colors, manner of sitting, throne-seat, and their individual symbolic gestures (and emblems). Those Bodies' presence pervades everywhere with their fivefold couplings, and each group of five has encircling hoops of light, while the spiritual families as embodied in the Fathers, the spiritual families as embodied in the Mothers, the Awakening Heroes and Heroines (Bodhisattvas), and all the rest of the maṇḍala are perfectly present in "one."
>
> At this time an extremely fine band of light shines forth from your own heart, manifesting such that it is links you to all those Bodies' Hearts. If you apprehend this with your own cognition, you will naturally remain within non-conceptual contemplation. This is termed "awareness entering light."
>
> In all those appearances a powerful throbbing becomes manifest, and from your heart's cord of light rays as well countless minute nuclei shine forth. Then from your own heart a cord of light rays like colored threads woven together shines forth. Then there manifests a vision where you experience all those Bodies dissolving within your own body, which is termed "light entering awareness hither." At this time, those individuals must keep in mind the supreme liberative means revolving around belief and trust in these visions as your own self-presencing, "like a child entering its mother's lap."

The luminous channels thus transcend the intensely private experiences of sexuality and death, moving tantric practice back to life, to a body-generated spinning out of pure worlds in external space, to the shifting inter-subjective worlds the practitioner ultimately must live within. I would also (very) tentatively suggest that since the interior body has at this point been so thoroughly managed and controlled by Buddhist colonization which has reinscribed the entire Buddhist cosmos and ideology within it,[90] that slipping into the vaster reaches of external space in part functions as an escape from certain elements of Buddhist discourse, though it immediately unfolds the most classic of all Buddhist maṇḍalas within this celestial locale.

Triune cosmogony and the human body

However, to fully understand this intersection between post-death visions of self-presenting Buddhas and the light meditations of direct transcendence, we must retrace our steps back to the beginning, namely to Seminal Heart's distinctive cosmogony which directly parallels both. In brief, out of a ground (*gzhi*) which is nothing (*med pa*), pure lands of mandalically organized light unfold in a process termed the ground-presencing (*gzhi snang*). This is visually presented as a vast panorama of realms seen as if from a cliff, trailing off into the nothingness of the Reality Body (*chos sku, dharmakāya*) at its heights and materializing into the specter of cyclic existences (*'khor ba, saṃsāra*) below; in between, however, the main part of the display is discussed in terms of pure lands of Buddha manifestations with intense light, mandalic configurations and perfect integration. *The Exquisite Auspiciousness Tantra* describes the moment thus:[91]

> The encasing seal of the "inner Youthful Body of the Vase" (i.e. the "ground," such that the bodies within a body theme is already present) being rent open, it is present as the outer abiding

89. Ab vol. 3, p. 222.3.

reality of spontaneous presence. At precisely that point, my manifestations are rent open into exteriority, and flow forth in transparency, shimmering, intangible, undulating, quivering, throbbing, and variegated.

Then there comes to be the great abiding reality of spontaneous presence. From within the unobstructed clearing-space of its primordial gnosis, the presencing process of the Enjoyment Body's (*longs sku, sambhogakāya*) pure lands comes to be. From within the unobstructed clearing-space of its dynamic qualities, the presencing process of the natural Emanational Bodies (*sprul sku, nirmāṇakāyā*) comes into being. From within the unobstructed clearing-space of its compassion, the presencing process of the impure emerges.

This initial scenario of beginnings is thus recapitulated at the moment of death, when dying's dissolution delivers one back to the pure process fluidity of the ground. The post-death visions then represent the vibrant ground-presencing reemerging from the ground. It is also this moment which is re-evoked, but this time with full reflexive awareness, in the practice of direct transcendence. In this light, we can see that the practice of breakthrough structurally and functionally parallels the event of death, though it does so through *release* of control of the experiential field and *not* in Anuttarayoga fashion through the *forced* dissolution of psycho-physical currents of energy into the body's deep interior. At any rate, whether the pure process of the ground is present at the cosmos's beginnings, in personal death, or contemplative release, its restirring into initially luminous manifestation presents what we might term a hermeneutical dilemma: are these external appearances self or other? In the tradition's own terms, the single ground gives way to two paths differentiated by the presence, or lack, of self-recognition (*rang ngo shes pa*): the path to nirvāṇa of Samantabhadra which dissolves strict boundaries between self and other, and the path to saṃsāra of ordinary sentient beings which concretizes such boundaries. Leaving aside for a moment the seemingly idealist overtones of this scenario, I will show how this basic dialectic applies in identical terms to all three contexts of the visions: cosmogonic, contemplative, and post-death.

In the cosmogonic context of Samantabhadra's primordial enlightenment, *The Tantra of Unimpeded Sound* says:[92]

Thus from the beginning and end of cyclic existence and transcendent reality,
The Expansively Awakened One has not strayed –
This insight faculty raised-up from the ground
Recognizes the self-presencing process as lacking any independent existence of its own,
And without its slipping outwards into the multi-dimensional psyche with its reifying discursive thought processes,
The flickering movement immediately cuts out in and of itself.

A similar description is given of post-death experiences in *The Lion's Perfect Dynamism* says:[93]

The compassion of the Buddhas' wisdom-energy
Primordially naturally pervades all living beings,
And thus when esoteric awareness manifests objectively,
The five manifest lights are like the meeting of a mother and child (i.e. instant recognition) –
When the son-appearances dissolve within the mother
All the displays and experiences of the manipulating intellect are cleansed away,
And having thus eliminated distorted thoughts and scriptural doubts

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90. I disagree with Samuel (1989) who seems to see the subtle body in Indian tantra almost exclusively in terms of release from social control. In fact Ots (1994) argues precisely the opposite to be the case in at contemporary China.
91. Ab vol. 1, p. 215.1.
92. Ab vol. 1, p. 107.5.
93. This passage is cited in Longchenpa's *The Treasury of Precious Words and Meanings*, though I have been unable to identify it within the current editions of the tantra itself.

The sun of primordial gnosis lights-up everywhere with its rays,
Totally dispersing the night-darkness of material things' illusion.

Because you are divested of the conceptual mind's doubts
Awareness' insight comes into its full strength,
Whereupon you emerge accordingly in a state beyond thought...

While as you abide in a crystal hut within this vast city
You experience the presence of primordial gnosis beyond language,
And come to see the authentic visions of the Secret Mantra.

When you don't process these pure objective visions of insight
In terms of conceptual considerations as to "is" and "is not,"
It is said that in five days you will obtain deep contemplation.

Finally, *The Great Esoteric Unwritten Tantra* presents the appropriate way in which to encounter the direct transcendence visions:[94]

The great means of awareness wherein you nakedly let appearances be
Is the foundation of all the great appearances:
As the Buddhas of the five elements light-up in the manner of the path,
And shine in the lighting-up of the foundational great five elements,
Rest within the state of non-distraction, in the great absence of fixation!
With these five great lights of the great secret mantra's five great primordial gnoses
Rest within the expanse devoid of disruption and agitation!

This naked letting-be of the Adamantine Hero's awareness
Reveals all the visionary appearances of the Reality Body –
With the naked vision of primordial gnosis's pure lighting-up
Rest within the state of the great naked letting-be as the means of esoterically letting be,
Neither actively rejecting nor distracted by the five elements in the Spiritual Bodies' appearance.
As you rest within this state's presence!

We may seem at this point to have gotten far away from the human body, yet other passages clearly indicate this cosmogonic ground as none other than Buddha nature or radiant light located in each living being's heart. From *The Inlaid Jewels Tantra*:[95]

Just as oil is itself primordially spontaneously present
Within a sesame or mustard seed,
The seed of the Tathāgatas' enlightened energy
Manifests along with its concordant luminosity
Within the deceptive embodied experiences of sentient beings.

Thus the cosmic narrative of the ground's unfolding intersects with Buddha-nature, the original body within a body discourse in Mahāyāna. The resulting detailed incorporation of the entire cosmogonic process within the body's interior as an account of personal consciousness through its permutations of waking, sleeping and dreaming is most clearly explained in a short text of Longchenpa's entitled *Introduction to the Lighting-up of the Expanse*. Here we see very clearly how this internalized cosmogonic process accounts not only for ordinary modes of consciousness, but also the special character of the contemplative visions:[96]

94. Ab vol. 2, p. 230.4.
95. Ab vol. 2, p. 24.1.
96. KGNT vol. 3, pp. 118.6 ff. I have not as yet located such an elaborate account in any of *The Seventeen Tantras* themselves, but the general framework of the cosmological "ground" (*gzhi*) radiating out from each individual's heart as the source of consciousness is clearly present throughout those texts.

... First is the way in which the ground's expanse abides. Prior to everything, there is the ground of the emanation of the triad of (empty) essence, (radiant) nature and (pervading) compassion from the great spontaneity of the primeval expanse (*dbyings, dhātu*). These three are totally indivisible, yet out of the essence's range the five lights of what is principally its nature's lighting-up manifests, together with which compassion's radiance manifests as awareness. If simultaneously there is self-recognition, (it all) proceeds back again to the range of the ground itself, and one takes hold of the secure site of the seamless union of the three Spiritual Bodies... Through the ignorant not recognizing (these appearances) as their own light, there is the so-called "co-emergent lack of awareness"; through their fixation on the self-presencing as other, there is the so-called "rampantly reifying lack of awareness." Thus the causes and conditions (of saṃsāra) are formed...

These three channels (of the human body described) in ordinary tantras... are not ultimate, and hence should be termed "the channel-petals of saṃsāra." The channel-petal of the great primordial nirvāṇa, on the other hand, is termed "the channel of self-emerging gnosis (*ye shes, jñāna*)," "the channel of the spontaneous ground-presencing," and the "channel of the pure crystal tube."

Its essence is self-emerging gnosis beyond the ordinary mind, while its visible aspect is luminous visions, since it is the unceasing shining process of the five Buddhas' (radiant) nature and (pervading) compassion. Thus it totally pervades all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the material environments and life forms. Having linked up within the vitality channel of the heart's eight cornered precious (palace) at the central channel's center, it acts as the support for all psychic activity. By winds pulling it into the channel's sheath, it functions as the operative ground of the five sensory modes of consciousness, the universal ground (*kun gzhi, ālaya*) and the egoic consciousness (*yid shes, manovijñāna*). When its radiation spreads within (all) the channels within the body, it exists in terms of lights and nuclei. It seems like they really exist in the sphere of the sky when they shine (as contemplative visions) on the surface of the tarnish-free mirror of their gateway, the "water lamp" (i.e. the eyes). However, one can see that (the visions) don't exist externally in the way these small nuclei and luminous appearances are uninterrupted even when one shuts one's eyes.

When that luminous channel's radiation abides within the vitality channel (i.e. the aorta) under the conditions of failure to recognize the self-emerging gnosis as self, it is termed the "indeterminate universal ground." The unceasing lucency and radiance of its radiation is the universal ground consciousness (*kun gzhi'i rnam shes, ālayavijñāna*) located within the vitality channel. Then its radiation spreads to the five sensory gateways (the eyes and so forth), such that the five sensory modes of consciousness become operative as mere non-conceptual vivid perceptions. The egoic consciousness (then ensues) when there is adulterated apprehension of the previous presence as an object through conceptualization. Its first instant is non-conceptual, but then the emotionally disturbed ego (*nyon mongs pa can gyi yid, kliṣñamanas*) kicks in when (the objects) are processed in terms of the emotional triad of attachment, aversion and neutrality, as relevant to the context.

Then when one is falling asleep, the five sensory modes along with the egoic consciousness enter into the universal ground consciousness, such that there is (an experience) of empty radiant light as one abides for an instant in non-conceptual clarity. Then that dissolves into the universal ground, such that there is only non-conceptuality as all of the wind-mind energy of the right and left channels based upon the five senses' channel-petals dissolve into the central channel. When one is then in one pointed sleep (immersed) in ignorance, there manifests a pure experience of radiant light totally devoid of dreams if one integrates it with stable contemplative experiences of bliss, radiant and non-conceptuality that have been previously attuned. At this time, for some yogis with the blessings of their Gurus and who have seen the five colored visions during the daytime, the central channel's winds dissolve into the crystal tube. The self-emerging appearances of the ground-presencing thus shine forth.

> If you wonder what that is like, small nuclei dawn like planets and stars above in the sky-like range of originary purity. Directly across, pure lands (manifest) like optical illusions in the range of the rainbow-like Enjoyment Bodies. Below, there manifest pleasures and pains like mirages in the range of the dream-like six modes of beings (i.e. gods, demigods, humans, and so forth). By recognizing all of that as self-presencing, the symbols dissolve and defilements are exhausted within the sky of phenomena's exhaustion, the range of original purity. I myself saw these in nighttime precious visions of gnosis through the blessings of Padmasambhava.
>
> If instead one lacks the key points of contemplative attunement, a wind stirs from the central channel into the vitality channel. Thus the egoic consciousness rises up from the universal ground with its diverse karmic latencies (*bag chags*, *vāsanā*), such that a variety of dreams manifest...

The text goes on to detail the way in which these modes of consciousness operate during the waking periods, and concludes with an account of the process of dying and post-death experience that again describes visions as "the great ground-presencing."

Subsequently in the same collection of texts, Longchenpa provides an even more detailed account of the cosmogonic process transpiring within the metaphysiology of the body's interior. Thus the unfolding of pure lands in the so-called "ground-presencing" is present in a fourth context, that of the body's interior or peri-personal space. It is ceaselessly reoccurring every moment of the day in the deep background of one's being, such that the Buddha-matrix's luminosity is automatically materialized into the distorted appearances (*'khrul snang*) of saṃsāra within the conduits of the body's infrastructure. The passage in question directly follows a cosmogonic account of the origins and formation of saṃsāra:[97]

> Within our human (bodies) in the present moment, the ground – self-emerging primordial gnosis – and the ground-presencing abide in their respective channel-petals out of the heart's luminous channel. The ground-presencing of gnosis manifests in the sky from the luminous channel, while the ground-presencing of the six types of beings is as follows. The radiating rays of gnosis in the heart mix with the lung's winds, such that it operates as the eight modes of consciousness within the heart's eight channels.[98] In this way, the radiating rays pervade the individual channel-petals of the six modes of being from (one's) head to foot.[99]
>
> When one's wind-mind energy gathers in these (locations), the distorted experiences of the (corresponding type of the) six modes of being manifest. This is the manifestation (filtered) through the impure gateway of saṃsāra. For we humans, the wind-mind energy is now concentrated in the channel-petal of humans. This is the key as to why we experience human objects, human places and so on.

Thus the entire cosmogony proceeds ceaselessly, albeit in the background, in the interior spaces of the body. Note that "gnosis" is associated with its manifestation in the "sky," while saṃsāra is associated with its internal manifestation within the body's energetic channels. The practice of direct transcendence brings

97. KGNT vol. 3, pp. 202.2-203.3. In Longchenpa's *The Wish-Fulfilling Treasure* (pp. 561, 668), Longchenpa discusses how standard tantric ideology specifies that the wind-mind energies' concentration in a bodily locale corresponding to a particular type of being will result in the practitioner having corresponding experiences. See the quote above from *The Treasury of Spiritual Systems*, where he criticizes normal perfection phase practices for their tendency to create situations in which the winds can become mischanneled in this fashion; he contrasts this to the direct transcendence, in which the inner light simply spontaneously expands outwards, thus bypassing this danger. While he doesn't quote from any tantras in this context, my impression is that these types of passages do exist in Anuttarayoga tantras, though I am uncertain to what extent. They clearly form a basic cosmogonic paradigm in the subtle body that the Seminal Heart builds upon.

98. The eight modes of consciousness are the standard sequence of the five types of sensory cognition, psychic cognition (*yid shes*), emotionally distorted psyche (*nyon yid*), and the universal ground consciousness (*kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa*).

99. The six standard types of beings in a Buddhist cosmos are gods, demigods, humans, animals, starving spirits and hell beings.

these background events out into the foreground by drawing them forth from the body's interior into the exterior expanse of the sky. The consequent visions thus entail watching internal psycho-cosmogonic events mirrored in the sky, such that the slowly emerging gestalts of Buddhas represent one's own psycho-physical energy reconfiguring within and without. The process of bringing it to the fore bypasses the ordinary routinized internal conversions of the ground-presencing, into distorted experiences, such that a reflexive understanding of its true nature again becomes possible. Once the reconfiguration has reached its optimal limits in the form of lucent maṇḍalas of the one hundred serene and wrathful deities that pervade the entire sky (the third vision), their consequent dissolution (the fourth vision) marks the end of the compulsive exteriorization of the body's interior. Instead, the Buddha's manifestation of forms is described in a language of play (*rol pa*), adornment (*rgyan*) and compassion (*thugs rje*), a subject which will take us too far a field for the time being.

Conclusion: self-constituting Buddhas[100]

While I have stressed the innovativeness of the tradition to accentuate and explicate its own self-representation, it is important to compare parallel elements in tantric traditions that mirror this emphasis on spontaneous light imagery, external visions, criticism of sexual practices and deity yoga, deconstruction of deep interiorization and undercutting of manipulative controls of internal energies. For example, there are the "four night and six daytime signs" mentioned above that occur as spontaneous apparitions in *The Wheel of Time Tantra*, or Saraha's criticism of sexual yoga.[101] However, for the time being, I have at least suggested how even in this most experiential of zones, we can perceive the tension of discourses and ideologies in dialogue with each other, and the need to think these poles – body and text, mysticism and discourse – together, separate but interrelated. In doing so, I have problematized the assumption that deity yoga and complicated subtle body practices were invariably the defining facets of classical Buddhist tantra, in contrast to which there were only naturalistic rejections of all image-related practice such as in Mahāmudrā and the Great Perfection. Primary among the Seminal Heart's striking features are the focus on the conduit between the heart to the eyes that overcomes solipsistic focus on the body's interiority and surface, and the anti-control rhetoric that substitutes letting-go to ignite the flow of images for the manipulative centering of the body's currents of energy in the central channel. This latter element reflects the paradigm of becoming a Buddha through surrender rather than control, as evident also in some of the the Dohā songs of Buddhist Siddhas in India. Finally, these practices in part functioned to de-structure Buddhist discourse with its strong ethical formulations that continued in tantra with the internalized bodhicitta,[102] its heavily regulated ritual and visualization sequences, and the like. When we become aware of how structure and process, the body and text, experience and tradition were as compelling and contested issues for the diverse trends within Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tantrism as they are for ourselves today, we can better reconstruct and appreciate the histories of the perpetually unfolding teachings of the Buddha in his tantric modality.

I would like to briefly recapitulate the essentials of the Seminal Heart's metaphysiology. The two centers (*'khor lo, cakra*) highlighted above all are the heart and the head, while the navel and genitals recede into the background. The heart is understood as the eight cornered *tsitta* (*citta*) palace of the forty two serene deities, while the head is described as the "conch shell house" of the fifty eight wrathful deities. In addition,

100. I would like to note how the subtle body of the Seminal Heart tradition is partially integrated with early Tibetan medical representations of the body's interior, and vice a versa. In fact, the key medical scripture was a revealed text contemporaneous with the revelation of the principal Seminal Heart tantras, and its finder was an important member of the same Nyingma tradition. It is as yet unclear to me the degree to which this convergence of the yogic body and medical body may be innovative in the context of Indian Buddhist tantra; in particular, I wonder about the degree to which such convergence is present in *The Wheel of Time Tantra*.

101. See Kvaerne 1986 and Guenther 1993.

102. The moral dimension gets reinscribed in the third dimension of the ground of all existence, "compassion" or "resonating concern" (*thugs rje*), but Samantabhadra as the primordial Buddha is said to have never done the "slightest good."

the heart is the ultimate location of gnosis in the body – also described as ground (*gzhi*), awareness (*rig pa, vidyā*), or the Buddha-nucleus (*de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po, tathāgatagarbha*) – which is repeatedly characterized as the creative agency behind all conventional mental and physical structures. Its efflorescence (*rtsal*) or radiation (*gdangs*) flows out from this center as the so-called ground-presencing (*gzhi snang*) in a network of luminous channels (*'od rtsa*). The primary channel is located as a slender line of light often termed the "pure crystal tube" (*ka ti shel gyi sbug can*) located within the center of the conventional central channel; most importantly for the contemplative visions, it runs up into the head, where it divides into two branches to run to the center of each eye. In some sources, the vitality channel (*srog rtsa*), or aorta, is specified as the wider sheath containing the central channel. When this gnostic radiation flows into it under the conditions of non-recognition, it gets channeled into ordinary modes of consciousness as the ground-presencing is habituated into the distorted experiences (*'khrul snang*) of saṃsāra. In particular, the ordinary mind's (*sems, citta*) conduit is said to exist in a special channel running between the heart and lungs. Tantric psychology discusses psychic activity as being the conjunction of breath or winds and the mind, which is imaged as a horse and its rider, the former blind and the latter crippled. This conduit allows awareness to radiate out from the heart as the rider, and breath to enter from the lungs as the horse, such that from it psychic activity ripples, or should we say gallops, outwards within the other channels crisscrossing the body's interior. Its further movement within tends to get tracked in specific conduits, some of which correspond to the particular type of being which one is (god, human, animal, etc.).[103]

In this way, we can see that the entire nature of the subtle body's representation reinscribes Buddha-nature discourse into the body's interior: gnosis creates the body on all its registers, whether the lived body, body of experiences, emotional bodies, or that most problematic of all bodily phenomena, the mind. Furthermore, the tradition's complex cosmogony of pure lands unfolding from absence is precisely paralleled in its account of post-death visions as well as contemplative visions. The contemplative tradition is unusual in its valorization of spontaneous image flow and in being principally based upon events *following* death rather than *preceding* death. This cosmogonic process then is located within the body's interior, with the subtle body physiology functioning to map out its events. The contemplative visions are understood as an exteriorization of these internal processes, which itself evokes the image of the primordial ground as a "youthful vase-body" (*gzhon nu bum pa'i sku*) holding the vast worlds within it until its seal is rent open (*rgya ral*) and they flood forth into exteriority. Thus within this tradition the positive formation of worlds is primarily a matter of the self-organization of pure lands. Since the visions in this case flow from one's own deep interior through the eyes and into the sky, the practitioner viscerally experiences the power of the tradition's exhortation to recognize all exterior appearances as "self-presenting" (*rang snang*), or one's own manifestations.

While the question of idealism raised by the tradition's interpretation of the relationship of appearances and self on the model of dreaming is too difficult to deal with adequately in the present context, I would like to point out both the immensity of self on this model *and* the complicated intersections of interior or exterior that it entails. On the one hand, the self is the sky, as the practitioner views his/her emerging self in visions stretching across the sky's expanse; on the other hand, the interior self is internally fissured into at least a hundred divine figures and the ceaseless generation of an entire cosmos. A self vast enough to embrace the sky *and* embrace all these pure and impure worlds within it is not a self of which one can assume an easy

103. Recent bodywork practitioners within the North America and Europe make related claims that reduplicating motor activities of earlier evolutionary stages, such as of reptiles, can bring that corresponding neuropsychological states to the fore, which remain latent within each of us. However that might be, this connection of the subtle body to the six realms is linked to other practices in the tradition, such as that of "the differentiation of cyclic existence and transcendence" (*'khor 'das ru shan*) and that of eradicating the six realms of possible rebirth through visualizing corresponding seed syllables placed within spots inside the body. The former involves crazily acting out behaviors and mindsets of the six realms in a yogic context in order to bring those tendencies to exhaustion. See Germano 1997 for further details.

knowledge. In the reorientation of subtle body ideology and practice to throw the mind out into space rather than into its own deep interiors, I would suggest the presence of a powerful post-tantric reformulation of ancient Buddhist ideas of interdependence, or inter-subjectivity (*rten 'brel, pratītyasamutpāda*). Lest my own rhetorical flourishes threaten to suggest a vague notion perhaps only tenuously related to the tradition itself, I would like to also point out a very mundane manner in which to understand the practice's integration of peri-personal with extra-personal spaces on a model drawn from neural science:[104]

> Studies of the sense of touch and its cortical representation in the anterior regions of the parietal lobe provide elementary examples of the internal representation of the body surface and of peri-personal space. This representation is not fixed, but can be modified by experience. Analysis of such modifications indicates that attentiveness is a factor in integrating the internal representation of the body with vision and movement, a process that incorporates the representation of peri-personal space with representations of extra-personal space. Here, body space becomes related to visual space, whether actual, imagined, or remembered. Thus, a simple representation of self is gradually enlarged into one that includes the external world, both real and imagined – the world in which the self functions.

This passage assumes added significance when one notes that practitioners of the Seminal Heart visions certainly lived within an environment where deeply interiorized subtle body meditations were widespread and most likely frequently practiced by themselves as well.[105] Thus I assume the power of such incorporation derives in part from the rhetorical or psychological reversal of these contemplative paradigms of deep interiorizaton and control. In addition, it may be relevant to note common Tibetan strategies for magically blocking off access to the body's interiors from dangerous demonic influences in the outer environment[106] and contrast it to this divine interpenetration of interior and exterior spaces that is allowed to playfully flow across permeable boundaries.

Finally, similar to contemporary concerns with the ambiguous nexus of relationships surrounding authors' creation of discourses and discourses' creation of authors, we can also question the significance of the tradition's strong claim that the Buddhas constitute the individual with their self-presenting (*rang snang*) displays, rather than individuals constituting Buddhas with the fabrications of deity yoga. To further pursue such issues, I think it is important to look to the socio-political context of such rhetoric, as well as treat it seriously as a theory of subjectivity that deserves to be more than mere fodder for inquiries that stake out horizons, not put horizons at stake. I have in mind here Thomas Ots' recent intriguing study of the socio-political conflicts that have surrounded the wildly popular – and politically controversial – Qi Gong contemplative movements in the People's Republic of China.[107] Basing himself on the government's avocation of quiet sitting Qi Gong and condemnation of the wildly cathartic "spontaneous movements" form of Qi Gong, Ots argues that the former supports social and mental control over the lived body (*leib*), in line with a general principle that bodily experiences are silenced by highly structured social domains. In contrast, the latter practices rupture the culturally inscribed and constructed body with their invocation of highly personalized and spontaneous events originating in the body itself. Without suggesting any direct parallels, I would like to reemphasize the Seminal Heart's emphasis on spontaneity within a broader tantric tradition governed by highly structured visualization scripts, as well as how it teaches that external experience is an exteriorization of bodily processes.[108] With this in mind, or body, let us end with an interesting, seemingly

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104. See Kandel 1995, pp. 345-6. I am indebted to Charles Herreshoff for drawing my attention to the significance of this passage in the current context.
105. I base the latter assumption on the fact that hagiographic accounts of the main lineage masters are replete with such references in terms of teachings received, transmitted and practiced.
106. See Desjarlais 1992, p. 46.
107. I would like to thank David Need for drawing my attention to this article.
108. In fact, the Seminal Heart tradition already in the eleventh century incorporates a very similar set of practices to the Qi Gong "spontaneous movements," namely the "differentiation" practice alluded to above. In Germano 1997,

innocuous quote from a member of one of the most institutionally conservative of Tibetan traditions, the Geluk (*dge lugs*), concerning the practice of the dark retreat in *The Wheel of Time Tantra*:[109] "There are a number of rather varying traditions concerning the actual meditation at this point. For example, one tradition instructs that one should direct the mind to the sky. Whereas, Gyeltsab Je states that this is ridiculous because the point of this practice is to draw the energies into the central channel. To bring the mind out, by directing it to the sky, would obviously not be of any benefit." Obviously, this was in fact far from obvious to some Tibetans. However we have now arrived at issues that, for the moment, must remain mere questions ventured tentatively into the vast reaches of our own ignorance of the socio-political implications of tantric discourse and practice.

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109. Dhargyey 1985, p. 134.

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The Profound Doctrine of Wisdom's Natural Freedom (in Encountering) the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities (*Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol*) by Karma Lingpa. Given the immense number of editions of this popular work, I have cited the individual titles so they can be easily located in any edition. The most comprehensive edition to appear to date is a three volume edition published by Sherab Lama in Delhi (1975-6; I-Tib 75-903780). It also appears in volume four of *The Storehouse of Precious Treasures* (pp. 1-281). Unless otherwise specified, all citations are from a 549 page small sized Tibetan edition printed on January first 1985 in India and entitled *Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las, bar do thos grol chen mo*. See Freemantle (1987) and Thurman (1993) for English translations of these core texts, which are known as *Liberation through Hearing in the Intermediate State* but have become well known in the English language materials as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

The Seminal Heart in Four Parts by miscellaneous authors (*sNying thig ya bzhi*). All page references are from the eleven volume edition, New Delhi, published by Trulku Tsewang, Jamyang and L. Tashi (1971). The current redaction has five separate collections of texts, despite its title indicating "four" parts:

1. *The Seminal Quintessence of the Spiritual Master* by Longchenpa (*Bla ma yang tig*, vols. 1; abbreviation LYT).
2. *The Seminal Heart of the Sky Dancer* by Padmasambhava (*mKha' 'gro snying thig*, vols. 2-3; abbreviation KGNT).
3. *The Seminal Quintessence of the Sky Dancer* by Longchenpa (*mKha' 'gro yang tig*, vols. 4-6; abbreviation KGYT).
4. *The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra* by Vimalamitra and other early Great Perfection Masters (*Bi ma snying thig*, vols. 7-9; abbreviation BMNT).
5. *The Seminal Quintessence of the Profound* by Longchenpa (*Zab mo yang tig*, vols. 10-11, abbreviation ZYT).

The Seven Treasuries (*mDzod chen bdun*) by Longchenpa. All page references are to the six volume edition, Gangtok, Sikkim, published by Sherab Gyaltsen and Khyentse Labrang (1983). I-Tib 83-905058. Another edition was published by Dodrup Chen Rinpoche, Gangtok, Sikkim (c. 1969). There is also a xylographic edition currently available from Degay Publishing House, in East Tibet. The individual seven titles are as follows:

1. *The Wish-Fulfilling Treasury* (*Yid bzhin mdzod*; YZD).
2. *The Treasury of Esoteric Precepts* (*Man ngag mdzod*; MND).
3. *The Treasury of Spiritual Systems* (*Grub mtha' mdzod*; GTD).
4. *The Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle* (*Theg mchog mdzod*; TCD).
5. *The Treasury of Words and Meanings* (*Tshig don mdzod*; TDD).
6. *The Treasury of Reality's Expanse* (*Chos dbyings mdzod*; CBD).
7. *The Treasury of the Precious Abiding Reality* (*gNas lugs mdzod*; NLD).

The Seventeen Tantras (*rGyud bcu bdun*) of transcendental authorship. Published in a three-volume edition based on the Adzom blocks. New Delhi: Sanje Dorje, 1973. This collection of tantras is located in most editions of *The Collected Tantras of the Ancient* (*rNying ma rgyud 'bum*); however, in the present context I have provided page references for individual citations from only the separately published three-volume edition. However, for comparative purposes, I have also provided below the pagination for the texts' location in the Tshamdrak (*mtshams brag*) edition of *The Collected Tantras of the Ancients*, an edition printed by the National Library, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, Bhutan, 1982 (Bhu-Tib 82-902165). "Ab" refers to the Adzom edition, and "Tb" refers to the Tshamdrak edition. The individual titles are as follows (I have translated the titles in standard abbreviated forms, but given the full title in the Tibetan):

1. *The Tantra of Unimpeded Sound* (*Rin po che 'byung bar byed pa sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*; Tb12 1-173, Ab1 1-205).
2. *The Tantra of Exquisite Auspiciousness* (*bKra shis mdzes ldan chen po'i rgyud*; Tb12 173-193, Ab1 207-232).
3. *The Tantra of All Good's Enlightened Spirit-Mirror* (*Kun tu bzang po thugs kyi me long gi rgyud*; Tb12 245-280, Ab1 233-280).
4. *The Blazing Lamp Tantra* (*sGron ma 'bar ba'i rgyud*; Tb12 467-491, Ab1 281-313).
5. *The Tantra of the Adamantine Hero's Heart-Mirror* (*rDo rje sems dpa' snying gi me long gi rgyud*; Tb12 193-245, Ab1 315-388).
6. *The Tantra of Self-Arising Awareness* (*Rig pa rang shar chen po'i rgyud*; Tb11 323-696, Ab1 389-855).
7. *The Inlaid Jewels Tantra* (*Nor bu phra bkod rang gi don thams cad gsal bar byed pa'i rgyud*; Tb12 712-777, Ab2 1-75).
8. *The Tantra of the Pointing Out Introduction* (*Ngo sprod rin po che spras pa'i zhing khams bstan pa'i rgyud*; Tb12 280-304, Ab2 77-109).
9. *The Six Spaces Tantra* (*Kun tu bzang po klong drug pa'i rgyud*; Tb12 394-467, Ab2 111-214).

10. *The Great Esoteric Unwritten Tantra* (*Yi ge med pa'i gsang ba rgyud chen po*; Tb11 298-322, Ab2 215-244).
11. *The Tantra of the Lion's Perfect Dynamism* (*Seng ge rtsal rdzogs chen po'i rgyud*; Tb12 560-712, Ab2 245-415).
12. *The Garland of Precious Pearls Tantra* (*Mu tig rin po che phreng ba'i rgyud*; Tb12 304-393, Ab2 417-537).
13. *The Tantra of Naturally Free Awareness* (*Rig pa rang grol chen po thams cad 'grol ba'i rgyud*; Tb11 699-757, Ab3 1-72
14. *The Tantra of Overflowing Preciousness* (*Rin chen spungs pa yon tan chen po ston pa rgyud kyi rgyal po*; Tb11 757-788, Ab3 73-114).
15. *The Blazing Relics Tantra* (*dPal nam mkha' med pa'i sku gdung 'bar ba chen po'i rgyud*; Tb11 788-815, Ab3 115-151).
16. *The Tantra of the Sun and Moon's Intimate Union* (*Nyi ma dang zla ba zla kha sbyor ba chen po gsang ba'i rgyud*; Tb12 491-560, Ab3 152-233).
17. *The Self-Emerging Perfection Tantra* (*sKu thams cad kyi snang ba ston pa dbang rdzogs pa rang byung chen po'i rgyud*; Tb11 1-298, Ab3 235-558).

P.T. 7A, P.T. 108, P.T. 240 AND *BEIJING BSTAN 'GYUR 3489:* ANCIENT TIBETAN RITUALS DEDICATED TO VAIROCANA

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E. Gene Smith has been most influential in Tibetan studies in many ways yet foremost among his scholarly achievements remains his vast bibliographic research throughout Asia to discover Tibetan xylographs and manuscripts. His efforts resulted in their publication and inclusion in the United States Library of Congress and its catalogue, thereby accessible to Tibetans and to scholars of Tibetology for generations to come. By virtue of his research, E. Gene Smith may justly be compared to the heroic explorers such as Paul Pelliot who recovered the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang, now preserved for future scholars in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. In a small gesture of homage, here will be presented a brief analysis and texts of two unpublished rituals for Vairocana from the Dunhuang manuscripts now in Paris.[1]

The importance of the cult of Vairocana in Tibet during the sPu rgyal dynasty has been well demonstrated by previous studies based on ancient artistic representations of Vairocana extant in the twentieth century and on research of the translations made during this period.[2] We propose to present preliminary analysis here of two Dunhuang manuscripts which constitute a ritual of praise to Vairocana and his entourage of the eight Bodhisattvas (*P.T. 7a, P.T. 108*) and a ritual dedicated to a *maṇḍala* of Vairocana (*P.T. 240*), with reference to the description of Vairocana developed in a ritual text attributed to rGyal ba'i 'od, one of the authors mentioned in the early ninth century lDan kar catalogue.[3]

The relationship of these rituals to the canonical cycles remains to be established. The translation of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (*STTS*) for the Vajradhātu cycle was accomplished in Chinese in 753 A.D. in the Hexi corridior region by Amoghavajra (705-774). The Tibetan translation of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* (*SDPS*) tantra followed soon after, as did the *Vairocanabhisambodhi* tantra (*VAT*), both of which are listed in the lDan kar catalogue; the iconography of Vairocana is distinct in each of these textual traditions.[4] Although today the extant translation of the *STTS* is that accomplished by Rin chen bzang po (958-1055), previous studies indicate that a version of the *STTS* was known in Tibet during the sPu rgyal dynastic period.[5] Dating from late eighth to late ninth century, four ancient major artistic representations of

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1. This paper is adapted from my presentation at the 1997 Beijing Tibetology Seminar and revised for the 1999 IABS Lausanne conference, which I attended thanks to support from the C.N.R.S., Paris, UMR 8047.
2. See in particular H.E. Richardson, "The Cult of Vairocana in Early Tibet," in Tadeusz Skorupski, ed., *Indo-Tibetan Studies*. Tring: The Institute of Buddhist Studies (Buddhica Britannica, II), 1990, pp. 271-274; Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra – Elimination of All Evil Destinies*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983; Alex Wayman and Ryujun Tajima, *The Enlightenment of Vairocana*. Vol. 1: *Study of the Vairocanabhisambodhitantra* (by A. Wayman); vol. 2. Study of the Mahāvairocana-Sūtra (by R. Tajima). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (Buddhist Tradition Series, 18), repr. 1992; and, most recently, Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism – Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
3. rGyal ba'i 'od is listed in the lDan kar catalogue as author of the *Byang chub kyi sems sgom pa* (609); see Marcelle Lalou, "Contribution à la bibliographie du Kanjur et du Tanjur - Les textes bouddhiques au temps du roi Khri-sroṅ-lde-bcan," *Journal Asiatique*, CCXLI, 3 (1953), pp. 313-353. rGyal ba'i 'od is the author of Beijing *bsTan 'gyur* No. 3489: *rNam par snang mdzad kyi sgrub pa'i thabs kyi cho ga*.
4. Lalou, *op. cit.*, nos. 321, 322, 323, 324.
5. See Lalou, *op.cit*, no. 319 in the category of *gSang sngags kyi rgyud: rGyud kun las btus pa*, which bears a title reminiscent of the Tibetan for *STTS*. I thank Matthew Kapstein for discussion (1997) of the hypothesis of this text as an earlier version of the *STTS*, and refer the reader to his recent volume, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism* (see above), ch. 4: "The Royal Conversion to Buddhism Reconsidered," pp. 51-68. On the basis of his analysis of Stein No. 367 II, Kimiaki Tanaka presented very convincing evidence of the translation of the *STTS* during the *snga*

Vairocana with eight Bodhisattva attendants are attributed to Tibetan patronage during this period: the rock sculptures of lDan ma brag (816 A.D.), the sculptures of 'Bis mda' lha khang (804/6 A.D.), the mural paintings of Yulin cave 25, and a portable painting on silk (the latter two are both attributed to the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang 787-866 A.D.),[6] but the Tibetan liturgical cycle which inspired these artistic representations had not hitherto been identified. The mystery is here potentially elucidated by the ritual in praise of Vairocana and the eight Bodhisattvas in texts *P.T. 7a* and *P.T. 108*.

The Vairocana teachings continued to develop as evidenced by *P.T. 242*, a complex successsion of *maṇḍala* centered on Vairocana and series of emanations of Bodhisattvas as well as eight *nāga*, eight *lha chen*. This ritual is linked by internal reference to the Vajradhātu cycle due to the residence of Vairocana in the realm named *rdo rje dbyings*. Vairocana is the *dharmakāya*, *chos kyi sku*, and here appears as a "generator" of the cosmos.

The center of the palm of the hand of Bhagavāt Vairocana is the ocean of the phenomenal worlds and in each of these phenomenal worlds resides a Tathāgata, and for each of these Tathāgata is a Bodhisattva. So they abide. To each of these Bodhisattvas, by the ocean of Buddhas is shown the ocean of Dharma. From the hairs on the face of Vairocana emanates the brilliant radiance of all the ocean of Buddhas of the Tathāgata.[7]

The *maṇḍala* described in *P.T. 240* is far more succinct. Here Vairocana is the center of a *maṇḍala* of five families of Jina, with the four *yum* of the other Jina and four *lha mo* offering goddesses attendants surrounding him. Rather than residing in the Vajradhātu, Vairocana and his attendants are in a divine palace of jewels, *rin chen gzhal yas sprul khang*. But other elements of this ritual recall the central *maṇḍala* of the five Jina Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* of the *STTS* as we will discuss below. In the Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* of clay statues in the gNas mjal che mo cave west of Kampa Dzong, the throne of Vairocana is surrounded by small sculpted symbols for each of the four *yum*, but eight offering goddesses face Vairocana.[8] This arrangment bears much comparison with the configuration of the clay statues of the *STTS maṇḍala* of Tabo,[9] stemming from Rin chen bzang po's translations of the *STTS* and its commentaries. However, among the eight Bodhisattvas represented at 'Bis mda', the statue inscribed with name of Spyan ras gzigs, Tibetan name for Avalokiteśvara, holds a vase not a lotus. This indicates that several styles of representation and several systems of iconography were known and used simultaneously for Vairocana and the eight Bodhisattvas.

Comparison reveals that the two textual fragments recovered from Dunhuang, *P.T. 7a* and *P.T. 108*, are in fact the same ritual. *P.T. 108* gives the initial verses of *P.T. 7a* which is truncated, *P.T. 108* appears complete, while *P.T. 7a* has an additional stanza. In the following paragraphs, the two texts are conjoined.

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dar in his presentation at the 1998 IATS, Bloomington seminar: "The Āryatattvasaṅgrahasādhanopāyikā and Vajrahūṁkārasādhanopāyikā discovered at Dunhuang," forthcoming in the proceedings of this seminar.

6. These artistic representations and the rock inscriptions of historic or liturgical texts nearby them were the subject of my research summarized in Amy Heller, "Buddhist Images and Rock Inscriptions from Eastern Tibet, VIIIth to Xth Century, Part IV," *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Graz,1997, pp. 385-403.
7. *P.T 242*, line 4: *bcom ldan 'das rnam par snang mdzad kyi phyag gi mthil gyi snying po 'jig rten gyi 'khams rgya mtsho zhes bya ba gnas so/ 'jig rten gyi 'khams de re re la yang/ de bzhin gshegs pa re re bzhugs so/ de bzhen gshags pa re re la yang byang chub sems pa re re mo/ de bzhugs so/ byang chub sems pa re re la yang/ sangs rgyas rgya mtshos chos rgya mtsho sten[? bstan] to/ rnam par snang mdzad zhal gyi mdzod spu nas/ da bzhin gshegs pa'i mtshan sangs rgyas rgya mtsho thams cad kyi 'od rab tu snang ba zhes bya ba bzhugs so*. It is beyond the scope of the present article to discuss in detail *P.T. 242* as the system of successive emanations is very complex and appears to be in related to the Avataṁsaka liturgy for the aspect rNam par snang mdzad Thub pa gangs chen mtsho rgyal (see note 12). I hope to pursue study of this text in the future.
8. For this sculptural Vajradhātu *maṇḍala*, see Amy Heller, "The Caves of gNas mjal che mo," in Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter and Eva Allinger, eds., *The Inner Asian International Style, 12th-14th Centuries*. Wien: WÖAW, 1998, pp. 133-150.
9. See Christian Luczanits, "The Clay Sculptures," in Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, ed., *Tabo: A Lamp for the Kingdom – Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya*. Milano, Skira, 1997, pp. 189-205.

Vairocana is lord of the Akaniṣṭha *'og min* paradise. Vairocana is not described physically using the specific translations of Indian Buddhist terminology of *mudrā* or *asanā*, but he is described in "normal" Tibetan language. He is the center of a *maṇḍala*, he is in perfect calm, in meditative mood, *mnyam bzhag*, he does not move, nor speak. This description of his meditative state contrasts very much with the Tibetan term for meditative gesture, which is found in the *VAT* and in rGyal ba'i 'od's *sādhana* ritual, *Chos kyi dbyings kyi phyag rgya*, Sanskrit: *dharmadhātu mudrā*. Although this terminology is not used in the two fragments, the position or gesture of the hands appears to be the same. The description of this gesture is supplied by Rgyal ba'i 'od as the two hands extended, the thumb tips meeting inwards, the index held tightly one above the other, which is the hand position habitually called *samādhi* or *dhyāna mudrā*.[10] In *P.T. 108/7a*, Vairocana is described as the *yid bzhin nor bu rin chen*, "the jewel of wish fulfilling jewels," probably a reference to a *saṃbhogakāya* representation in jewels and royal garments as described in *VAT*. In contrast, Rgyal ba'i 'od's text, fol. 361b, stipulates that the Bhagavāt Vairocana may be venerated either in the golden body and attributes of royalty (crown, diadem, braid, upper and lower garments of silk) or in the form and color of Śākyamuni, with monastic robes: *pad ma seng ge gdan de la sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnam par snang mdzad gser gyi kha dog thor tshugs dang dbu rgyan dang cod pan can dar la'i stod g.yogs dang smad g.yogs can nam/ shakya thub pa'i cha byed dang kha dog dang dbyibs ji skad du grags par 'ang rung ste.* This text thus documents representation of Vairocana in either the aspect of *nirmāṇakāya* or *saṃbhogakāya*, whichever is suitable for the practioner.

In the 'Bis mda' temple, at the center of the eight Bodhisattvas statues, the statue of Vairocana is sculpted wearing the heavy robes with long sleeves, crown and boots of the *btsan po*, the Tibetan sovereign, as known from contemporary paintings of the *btsan po* and his attendants, such as in the Dunhuang cave 159. This 'Bis mda' Vairocana statue somewhat tends to amalgamate the concepts of *nirmāṇakāya* – the representation in human body – and the *saṃbhogakāya* representation in the ideal body of bliss wearing royal garments, which are usually Indian garments in light, diaphanous Indian silks for scarves, blouse and pants. Among Buddhist countries, to my knowledge, only in Tibet does one find representations of Buddha wearing boots! This distinctive and ancient iconography of Vairocana at 'Bis-mda' has been identified as the Vairocana of the Glacier Lake (*rnam par snang mdzad gangs can mtsho*).[11] It partially corresponds to the description made by Bu ston in his Chos 'byung:

> *de'ang rnam snang gangs can mtsho'i phyag gi mthil gyi rdul phran gcig la gnas shing rnam snang de longs skur 'dod do/ ngo bo nges pa mtshan dpes brgyan pa/ 'khor nges pa sa bcu'i byang sems/ longs spyod nges pa theg chen gyi chos la rdzogs par longs spyod pa/ de nges pa rgyun mi chad pa'o/*

Bu ston describes Vairocana of the Glacier Lake as having Vairocana in the desired from as *saṃbhogakāya* in a minute part of the open palm of his hand, the latter is adorned with the characteristic signs of the Buddha, surrounded by Bodhisattva of the ten fields. Thus the rNam snang gangs can mtsho has his hands in *dhyānamudrā* to accommodate Vairocana and the ten Bodhisattva – but the *mudrā* of the second Vairocana

10. rGyal ba'i 'od, *bsTan 'gyur* no. 3489, *Rnam par snang mdzad kyi sgrub pa'i thabs kyi chog ga, Ngu*, fols. 358-368. Description of the *mudrā* on fol. 361a: *chos kyi dbyings kyi phyag rgya ... ni lag pa gnyis khu tshur bcangs la mthe bo gnyis nang du bcugs ste mdzub mo gnyis bsgreng ngo* (Daisetsu T. Suzuki, ed., *The Tibetan Tripitaka. Peking Edition*. Tokyo: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1957: *bsTan 'gyur, rgyud 'grel*, vol. 77: pp. 223-229). I thank Ven. mTshan zhabs Rin po che of Zürich for his help in the interpretation of rGyal ba'i 'od's text. For *samādhi mudrā*, the *SDPS* uses the term *ting 'dzin phyag rgya* according to the description of Kun rig Vairocana in Skorupski, *op. cit.*, 1983, pp. 311-313.

11. See Samten G. Karmay, p. 478 in "Inscriptions Dating from the Reign of *btsan po* Khri lDe-srong-btsan," in *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Graz: 1997, pp. 477-486. In personal correspondence S. Karmay has explained his source for this identification as his informant, gDugs dkar Tshe Ring. My thanks to Gregor Verhufen for reference to his study of 'Bis-mda': gDugs dkar Tshe Ring, "*Yul shul 'bis khor rnam snang gtsug lag khang gi bod btsan po'i dus kyi brag brkos lha sku yi ge la yang bskyar dpyad pa*," in *Zangzu Lishi Zongjian Yanjiu*: Beijing: Zhong Guo Zang Xue Chu, 1996, pp. 283-328.

is not indicated, although it is stated that in this *saṃbhogakāya* manifestation, he is the completely perfected Dharma of Mahāyāna.[12]

In *P.T. 7a* and *P.T. 108*, the eight Bodhisattvas are named and described by color, for example, Avalokiteśvara is white. It is not certain whether the colors and attributes were constant in the liturgy of the period, for the statue of Avalokiteśvara at 'Bis mda' has gold body color (but this is probably due to a later over-painting of color) but as mentioned above, the attribute held is a vase, which is not his typical lotus attribute of later liturgy. In *P.T. 7a* and *108* Avalokiteśvara is textually described as white "like a glacier mountain" (*gangs ri 'dra*), which is certainly a very Tibetan literary metaphor. Although no Sanskrit antecedent text for this ritual has been found, this metaphor implies that the Tibetan authors were already adapting Buddhist literature to the Tibetan concepts and not simply translating verbatim. In addition, Avalokiteśvara is also compared to a lotus, but the descriptions of the other Bodhisattvas are in general less specific for attributes.

As the members of the group of eight Bodhisattvas can vary considerably, it is pertinent to list those named in *P.T. 7a* and *P.T. 108*: Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Ākaśagarbha, Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambīn, Kṣitigarbha. Notably absent from the list of *P.T. 7a/108* is Vajrasattva who does figure among the inscribed names of the eight Bodhisattvas surrounding Vairocana in the British Museum painting inv. 50.Ch.0074 recovered by Sir Aurel Stein from Dunhuang.[13]

The description of Marcelle Lalou had noted *P.T. 7a* as a group of texts among which item 3 is the *rNam par snang mdzad 'khor dang bcas pa la bstod pa*, of which the beginning is missing. Her description of *P.T. 108* indicated a fragment composed of two texts, the first of which is *Sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnam par snang mdzad 'khor dang bcas pa la bstod pa*. The two titles are equivalent: "Hymn of praise to Buddha Vairocana and his entourage."[14]

Transcription of *P.T. 108* and *P.T. 7a*

P.T. 108

sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnam par snang mdzad 'khor dang bcas la bstod pa'/ rnam par snang mdzad bcom ldan 'das/ 'og myin mnga' bdag chos kyi rje/ sa bcu brnyes pa'i dkyil 'khor na/ myi gsung myi g.yo mnyam bzhag kyang/ yid bzhin nor bu rin chen ltar/ bsams pa tsam gyis dngos grub cing/ bltas pa tsam gyis re bskong ba/ mgon po'i mchog la phyag 'tshal lo/ spyan ras gzigs dbang 'jigs rten mgon/ thub pa'i dang po spyi

P.T. 7a

Line 1

gtsug brgyan/ sku mdog dkar gsal gangs ri 'dra/ nyon mongs myi gos pad ma bzhin/ thugs rje che zhing mthu ldan pa/ sems can nyam thag phongs dgu yis/ dran na sdug bsngal zhi mdzad pa/ mgon du gyur pa la phyag 'tshal lo/ myi 'pham dga' ldan chos kyi rje/ ye shes pha rol phyin rdzogs te/ chos kyi sprin la mnga' brnyhes zhing/ thams cad mkhyen du tshe gcig thogs/ dus ngan tha ma lo bcu'i tshe/ mngon sprul dge bcu

Line 2

rims bstan nas/ ring por myi thogs 'chang rgya ba/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ nam mkha'i snying po skyon mi gos/ dgongs pa rgya che nam mkha' bzhin/ sems can rab 'byam mang don du/ 'jig rten nam

12. See Bu ston, *bDe bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod*, mTsho sngon mi rigs par khang, 1987, p. 89 and E. Obermiller, *History of Buddhism by Bu-ston*, Heidelberg, 1931, p. 132. My translation differs from that of Obermiller, who did not recognize the specific aspect of Vairocana as rNam snang gangs can mtsho rgyal.

13. See M. Yoritomi, "An Iconographic Study of the Eight Bodhisattvas in Tibet," in Skorupski, *op.cit.*, 1990, pp. 323-332.

14. Marcelle Lalou, *Inventaire des manuscrits tibétains de Touen Houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Pelliot tibétain*, vol. 1. Paris: Maisonneuve, 1939.

mkha' mthas klas par/ bskal pa chen po dpag myed du/ 'khor bas yongs su myi skyo bar/ sgrub pa nam mkha' mthas 'jal ba/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ rgyal sras thu bo

Line 3

kun tu bzang/ snga dus bskal pa mang po nas/ dri ma'i skyon rnams yongs bsal cing/ las dang nyon mongs ci tsam bya/ dgongs bzhin srid pa yongs 'dzin cing/ bzang po spyod pa rgya chen gyis/ 'gro ba mtha' dag rnam 'grol ba/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ phyag na rdo rje gsang ba'i bdag/ rigs sngags byin rlabs kun gyi bla/ rdzu 'phrul mthu stobs bsam myi khyab/ bdud dang bgegs kyis yongs

Line 4

myi rje/ ri rab rtse la mthu brten te/ lha klu gnod sbyin btul phab nas/ 'byung po kun la mnga' mdzad pa/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ dpal gyi dam pa 'jam pa'i dbyangs/ tshogs chen rnam gnyis yongs bskangs pas/ bsod nams tshogs kyis mdzes dgur ldan/ ye shes tshogs kyis mkhyen pa 'phags/ sku gsung thugs rnams yongs dag pas/ 'jam mnyen snyen pa phun sum tshogs/

Line 5

mthong thos thams cad yid 'dul pa/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ sgrib pa thams cad rnam sel pa/ 'jig rten 'dren pa'i shes rab kyis/ lta ba'i dra ba mang bsal te/ bdag myed rnam gnyis rab rtogs pas/ sgrib pa gnyis po yongs sel cing/ gzhan yang yang dag lha lam du/ rnam par bkod pa dge bshes mchog/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ sa'i snying po yongs kyi rten/ dge ba'i lo tog

Line 6

kun kyi gzhi/ brtson 'grus go cha myi shigs sra/ rkyen ldan dus bzhin byin kyis rlob/ khyod la brten te bsgrubs so 'tshal/ sdug bsngal zad pa'i mthar gyur pas/ snying po yang dag thob mdzad pa/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ rnam par snang mdzad 'khor dang bcas pa la bstod pa rdzogs so/

While *P.T. 107* concludes after the evocation of Sa'i snying po in line 6, *P.T. 108* continues as follows until the end of the sheet of paper, and then remains incomplete.

'phags pa dri ma myed pa grags/ thams la mkhas pa mchog brnyes pas/ khyim bdag chen po gzugs ston yang/ shes rab pha rol phyin bsgomste/ dngos po ji bzhin yongs mkhyen pas/ 'du 'dzi kun la rab dben cing/ 'jig rten skyon ris/ myi chags pa/ mgon du gyur la phyag 'tshal lo/ thugs rje chen po rin can dpal/ sku gsung thugs kyang rin cen te/ myi skyo las la myi dgongs par/ phyag na rin cen rab gthong ba/ zhal nas rin cen chos ston cing/ sangs rgyas rin cen thob par mdzad/ rin cen thams cad 'byung ba'i gnas/ mgon du gyur la phag 'tshal lo/ mthu chen khams gsum rnam par rgyal/ rnam thar gsum po rab bsgoms pas/ srid pa gsum gyi nyon mongs bsal/ dpa' brtan mthu stobs che dang ldan/ do tshol sdog (end of sheet).

Transcription of *P.T. 240*

We next refer to the text of *P.T. 240*, which for all apparent purposes is a text which combines elements of the vocabulary and iconographic systems of the two tantra *VAT* and *STTS*. Vairocana is gold, like the *VAT*, not white as in the *STTS*. Like *P.T. 108* and *7A*, Vairocana is compared to a "wish fulfilling jewel" (*yid bzhin nor bu*). In *P.T. 240*, his *mudrā* however is the *bodhyagrī mudrā*, *byang chub mchog gi phyag rgya*. This *mudrā* is textually documented in the extant liturgy of the *STTS* but does not figure in the *VAT* or in Rgyal ba'i 'od's composition as retained in the *bsTan 'gyur*. In Indian iconography and later Tibetan iconography, the *bodhyagrī mudrā* is understood as the gesture where the index of left hand is clasped by the five fingers of the right hand. But the term *byang chub mchog gi phyag rgya* literally signifies "the gesture of the highest enlightenment." It does not describe how to position the hands. This may have been a factor leading to a certain degree of uncertainty in artistic representations. Is the "best enlightenment" characterized by the clasping gesture or the *samādhi mudrā* where one hand lies atop the other, as explained by Rgyal ba'i 'od's ritual and the *VAT*? The variant hand positions of representations of Vairocana do not permit clear understanding at present of how the understanding of the term *byang chub mchog gi phyag rgya* may have varied in different lands and different periods. It is to be hoped that future documentation may help to establish chronology or textual or artistic context in which the differentiation may be clarified. The Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* is characterized by the five Buddha families, while *VAT* has three or five families. *P.T. 240* has 5 families, *rigs lnga sangs rgyas*, with a more elaborate description of their attributes and colors

than *P.T. 7a* or *P.T 108*. In *P.T. 240*, colors and attributes follow the later Vajradhātu as known from Rin chen bzang po's translation of *STTS*. For example, in the west (fols. 3b-4a of text), the *yum* of the Lotus family is red in color, holding the lotus and a jewel. Still, there is a degree of literary innovation, such as the *yum* of the Vajra family; this is the female deity Locana being compared to a crystal brilliance (fol. 1b: *shel gyi gzi/ shel gyi 'od*), as are several other female deities in this ritual.

P.T. 240

Fol. 1

dpal rdo rje sems pa' la phyag 'tshal lo/ rigs lnga sangs rgyas 'khor dang bcas pa thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo/ rdo rje 'dzin pa thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo ... rin cen gzhal yas sprul khang na/ dbus kyi nyi ma'i dkyil 'khor na/ (fol. 1b) *dpal cen rnam par snang mdzad bzhugs/ gser mdog ri rab byang gi ngos/ longs spyod rdzogs sku yid bzhin gther/ byang cub mchog gi phyag rgya tshul/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ nye gnas dbyings ma' bzhi bzhugs pa/ shar kyi*

Fol. 2

phyogs na bzhugs pa ni/ rdo rje rigs kyi yum yin te dpal gyi dam pa lotsana/ dkar la rtsa dmar mdangs dang ldan/ shel kyi gzi dang mdog 'dram/ sna tshog sa rgyan gyis rab du brgyan/ 'od kyi 'phrang bas rnam par (fol. 2b) *klubs/ spyan gyi dam pa sku bzhugs te/ g.yon kyi phyag na spyan yang 'dzin/ g.yas kyi phyag na rdo rje bsnams/ zla ba'i dkhyil 'khor bdan la bzhugs/ rdo rje rigs kyi dam bskul ba/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ lho'i phyogs na bzhegs pa ni/ rin cen yum*

Fol. 3

yi rigs kyi yum yin te/ dpal gyi dam pa ma maki nam ka'i mdangs dang ldan pa'i/ be du rya mdog 'dram rin chen sprul pa'i rgyan dang ldan/ sna tshogs rin cen mdzod kyi gther/ g.yas kyi phyag ba rin cen bsnams/ g.yon kyi phyag na yid bzhin 'dzin/ zla ba'i dkhyil 'khor (fol. 3b) *gdan la bzhugs/ rin cen rigs kyi dam bskul ba/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ nub kyi phyogs na bzhugs pa ni/ pad mo rigs kyi yum yin te/ dpal gyi dam pa na bza' dkar/ mdog dmar pad mo ra ga 'dra'/ yid bzhin ldan pa'i rgyan gyis gzhugs/ shi*

Fol. 4

na du gsal ba'i yid bzhin mdzad/ g.yas kyi phyogs na' pad ma bsnams/ g.yon gyi phyag na yid bzhin 'dzin/ zla ba'i dkyil 'khor gdan la bzhugs/ pad mo rigs kyi dam bskul ba/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ byang gi phyogs na bzhugs pa ni/ las kyi rigs (fol. 4b) *gyi yum yin te/ dpal gyi dam pa dam cig sgrol/ mdog ljang i 'dra ne la 'dra/ sna tshogs mdzes pa'i mdangs dang ldan/ shin tu gsal ba'i yid bzhin mdzes/ g.yas gyi phyag na ud dpal bsnams/ g.yon gyi phyag na yid bzhin 'dzin/ zla ba'i dkyil 'khor gdan la bzhugs*

Fol. 5

las kyi rigs gyi dam bskul ba/ 'dir gshegs mchod dam bzhes/ nang rim lha mo bzhi bzhugs/ shar gyi phyogs na lha mo ni/ rdo rje rigs mchog sgeg mo ste/ rdo rje mdzes can lha mo la/ dkar lrtsa dmar mdangs dang chas/ shel gyi gzi dang mchog 'dram/ zla ba'i dkyil (fol. 5b) *'khor gdan la bzhugs/ rdo rje'i khu tsur dkar bstan te/ 'dzum steg tshul gyis thugs dam bskul/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ lho'i phyogs gyi lha mo ni/ rin cen rigs te 'phreng ba ma/ mdog sngo be du rya'i mdog 'dram/ rin cen sprul pa'i spyan dang ldan/ zla ba'i dkyil 'khor gdan*

Fol. 6

la bzhugs pa/ rin cen 'phreng bas thugs dam bskul/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ nub kyi phyogs kyi lha mo ni/ pad ma rigs gyi dbyangs mkhan ma/ mdog mdzes pad ma dmar ba'i mdog/ yid bzhin rin cen rgyan du bsnams/ zla ba'i dkyil 'khor gdan la bzhugs/ (fol. 6b) *sgra dbyangs snyan las thugs dam bskul/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes/ byang gi phyogs gyi lha mo ni/ las gyi rigs gyi gar mkhan ma/ dkar dmar mdzes pa'i yid 'phrog ma/ zla ba'i dkyil 'khor gdan la bzhugs/ brda mchog gar gyis thugs dam bskul/ 'dir gshegs mchod pa dam pa bzhes ...*

Fol. 7

skol mdo drug la/ dam tsigs/ bzlas brjod/ bsreg sbyang/ lta ba'/ lha bsgom pa/ smon lam dang drug go/ dam tshig gang zhen/ tshul khrims dang sdom ba'i rang bzhin/ sku gsung thugs kyi dam tsig gi rtsa ba

gsum dang/ spyod pa'i dam tshigs las tshogs ste/ lung bnos nas/ bsrung ba dang spyod pa'o/ bsregs bzlas brjod (fol. 7b) *pa ni/ sngags kyi snying po sems la zlos pa dang/ tan tra'i lung rgyud dang/ ngag gis gsal bar brjod pa'o/ bsreg sbyang ni mchod pa'i zhal zas kyi rnams/ sku gsung thugs kyi snying po/ 'o ma gis bsreg/ om gis 'ong.du bsgyur/ hum bdud rtsi zi lngar bsgyur ba dang/ yang gcig du na/ bskul gsum gis sbyang zhing bag cags bkrus ste/ mye'i*
Fol. 8
bskal pas dngos pa gang yang rung ba bsreg/ rlung gi bskal pas bsregs pa'i thal ba thams cad phyar g.yeng/ chu ba'i bskal ... (tear in page) *cags bkru zhing sbyang ngo/ lta ba ni shes rab chos tshul stong* ... (tear in page) *sar chud cing rigs dang/ kun rdzob bsgyu mar dngos* ... (tear in page) *mas/ gzugs brnyan dang brag cha lta* (end of *P.T. 240*).

Although certain parallels with *VAT*, *SDPS* and *STTS* have been suggested, there is not yet clarification of the textual origin of these Dunhuang manuscript fragments. It remains to be determined with which tantra or liturgical cycles these rituals are to be associated, or whether they stem from cycles which are no longer extant. The Tibetan texts are presented here in full in the hope that other scholars may find data complementary to their own research.

THE INSCRIPTION(S) AT 'BIS RNAM SNANG (EASTERN TIBET)

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'Bis (mda' / khog) Rnam snang is situated at a distance of about 25 kilometres to the south-west of Jyekundo (Skye rgu mdo) in Eastern Tibet. There is a well-known temple of which the popular tradition attributes the construction to the Chinese Princess Wencheng in the first half of the seventh century. On the rock-face behind the temple, there are inscribed inscriptions in Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan. What interests us here are those in Tibetan.

In recent years, there have been several reports on them: Gnya' gang Dkon mchog tshe brtan and Padma 'bum in 1988, *Khams stod lo rgyus thor bsdus* (*stod cha*) in 1995, Gdugs dkar Tshe ring in 1996, Samten G. Karmay and Ba thar Bkra shis chos 'phel, both in 1997. As we are going to see, it is regrettable that none of them is rigorous enough and complete in description. As a result one is confused even as to such a fundamental issue of the number of the Tibetan inscriptions. Karmay, who visited the site in 1993, reports two inscriptions (Karmay, p. 479). The inscription I, in 16 lines, inscribed on a steep and rugged rock-face about 3 meters high above the ground is almost illegible, and it is partly covered by the wall of the main temple (photos, p. 485, fig. 1 & 2). Karmay could read only *khyi'i lo la*, "in the year of dog". The inscription II is carved in on a small square stone slab fitted into the front wall of the temple building. The inscription has 10 lines (photo, p. 486, fig. 3. This inscription has been published without any legend in *Qinghai lishi jiyao*, 1987, pl. 10). Karmay states (p. 480): "Inscription II is of genuinely ancient origin and there is no doubt about its authenticity judging from the style and vocabulary of the language in which it is composed". He dates this inscription 806 AD. As for the relationship between the two inscriptions, Karmay thinks (p. 479) that the inscription I contains a version of the inscription II.

Gnya' gang Dkon mchog tshe brtan and Padma 'bum, who have seen the inscription II, note that it has 9 lines, but do not specify its location. The inscription is transcribed at p. 66 of their essay, and one notices that the last and ninth line doubles the length of the other lines. When I told him that the picture of the inscription reproduced by Karmay shows without any doubt 10 and not 9 lines, Padma 'bum acknowledged (personal communication) that they probably made a mistake in counting the number of lines. In any way, the transcription of the inscription which they give is identical to that given by Karmay, except for the fact that the last and ninth line of the former is split into two in the latter.

Gdugs dkar Tshe ring, who accompanied S. Karmay in 1993 to 'Bis Rnam snang, simply reproduces – without any information on its location – the inscription in 9 lines (pp. 287-288), as it is copied by Gnya' gang Dkon mchog tshe brtan and Padma 'bum.

Another author, Ba thar Bkra shis chos 'phel, who also visited 'Bis Rnam snang in 1987, provides a specific description about the location of the inscription, which he saw and copied. He says (p. 96) that he took a ladder (*them skas*) in order to examine it on the rock face behind the temple building (*lha khang gi rgyab kyi brag ngos*). Quite regrettably he does not specify either the number of lines or the size of the inscription. Furthermore, the transcription of the inscription he gives (p. 96) is not complete, but it is in perfect harmony with the classical orthography, without any of the pre-classical features – like the reversed vowel sign *i* and the under-scribed letter *ya* in *myi* or *myed*. Was the original inscription in classical orthography, or did he carelessly put it in classical orthography? In any way, the text which he provides is identical, except some omissions and minor variants, with that of the inscription on the stone slab which the other authors copied.

From what we have seen, it seems that the inscriptions I and II are one and the same. In fact, the only words which S. Karmay could read in Inscription I – *khyi'i lo la* – are contained at the beginning of Inscription II. For some reason unknown to us, maybe because the original inscription was damaged or because it is not easily readable due to its high position (3 meters above the ground), Inscription I must have been reproduced on a smaller stone slab, what is now Inscription II.

S. Karmay (p. 480) says that Inscription II is "of genuinely ancient origin". However, a closer look at the text of the inscription shows certain peculiar features which reveal in our opinion that it can not be genuinely ancient. In fact, its orthographical peculiarity has strangely escaped the attention of Karmay. For example, in line 10, one reads *med* and not *myed* in *bla na med pa*. The absence of the under-scribed *ya* (*ya btags*) is absolutely unusual for an inscription of the beginning of ninth century. *Corpus* of the Dunhuang materials of the same period (Y. Imaeda and T. Takeuchi, *Choix de documents de Touen-houang*, tome III: *Corpus*. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1990) does not show a single case of *med* against 60 cases of *myed*. As a matter of fact, one finds in *Corpus* two cases of *med* (PT 1287, l. 140 and l. 374) but they are both errors of transcription. It is rather a natural tendency to remove pre-classical features while transcribing ancient texts. For example, Ngag dbang don grub, who copied the text of ancient inscriptions for H. E. Richardson, made the same type of error: *mi* instead of *myi* (H. E. Richardson, *A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions*. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1985, p. 78, "Skar chung Inscription", l. 33, Original photo, pl. 10).

Another unusual feature is *la sogs pa* (l. 2). Again *Corpus* enlists not a single case of this classical spelling. What one finds in the Dunhuang materials contemporary with our inscription is invariably *la stsogs pa* or *las stsogs pa*.

The underlined double curl opening sign (*mgo yig*) is also unusual for a text of the ninth century. I have never come across with this classical sign in the Dunhuang and contemporary materials (cf. C. Scherrer-Schaub. "Towards a methodology for the study of old Tibetan manuscripts: Dunhuang and Tabo", in E. Steinkellner, ed., *Tabo Studies II*. Roma: ISIAO, *Serie Orientale Roma* LXXXVII, 1999, pp. 17-18, 25).

These features oblige us to seriously question the antiquity of Inscription II. For the reason explained above, I think that the text of Inscription II is a faithful transcription in classical orthography of the original Inscription I, which must have been in pre-classical spelling. There is no reason to question the authenticity of the text of Inscription II – therefore the argument of S. Karmay based on it – but the inscription itself must be of a later period.

The guide of 'Bis Rnam snang, composed in 1958 by a monk named Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (*Mdo stod gnas chen 'bis rnam snang zhes lha gcig rgya bza' long jos brkos pa'i dkar chag don bzhin ston pa'i zhal lung*, reproduced in *Khams stod lo rgyus thor bsdus* [*stod cha*], 1995, pp. 50-61), mentions already the inscription in 10 lines identical with the stone slab photographed by S. Karmay. This seems to indicate that the stone slab inscription was already made by 1958.

As has been noted, the reports hitherto published are regrettably incomplete and imprecise in many regards. Therefore, no definite conclusion can be drawn concerning the relationship between the two inscriptions at 'Bis Rnam snang. Because of their historical importance, it is hoped that a photograph and a faithful transcription of Inscription I on the rock face will be made accessible for research so that its authenticity be established beyond any doubt.

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Gdugs dkar Tshe ring

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Gnya' gong Dkon mchog tshe brtan and Padma 'bum

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PAINTING STYLES IN THE RUBIN COLLECTION: IDENTIFICATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

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Although the chronology of the founders of the main schools of Tibetan Buddhist painting is now established beyond dispute[1] and a few examples of most schools can now be identified,[2] the stylistic classification of actual paintings continues to vex historians of Tibetan art. This conundrum was once worse, so we can be grateful for whatever progress has been made.[3] Part of the problem may derive from the oversimplified classification scheme we have inherited from the Tibetan authorities, according to which there are only three main later schools: 1. sMan-ris, 2. mKhyen-ris, and 3. sGar-bris, the second of which is rare. Traditional authorities do subdivide the two most important schools, distinguishing an old from new sMan-ris, treating the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho almost as a separate school. In the same way, some differentiated between old and new sGar-bris, the "new" referring to styles Si-tu Paṇ-chen patronized in eighteenth-century Khams. Yet even with such additional refinements, one suspects that the styles were more numerous and their relations more complex.

One of the bravest recent attempts to apply the traditional styles is Rhie and Thurman's catalogue of the Rubin collection, a book to which I contributed a chapter.[4] Here I would like to try to clarify a few points in that catalogue, while proposing some further stylistic identifications.[5] I offer these remarks as a recent footnote to the study of Tibetan painting styles that E. Gene Smith pioneered thirty years ago through his introduction to Kong-sprul's encyclopedia.[6]

The Main Tibetan Styles

The "Tibetan styles" (*bod bris*) that took hold after the sMan-thang-pa revolution in the mid-fifteenth century can be classified:

1. sMan-ris
   a. Old sMan-ris
      i. Modern Successors to the Old sMan-ris in dBus: The E-bris and "Gelukpa International School"
      ii. Successors to the old sMan-ris in western gTsang (Shel-dkar, etc.)[7]
   b. New sMan-ris
      i. New sMan-ris of Tashilhunpo, forerunner to the gTsang-ris
      ii. New sMan-ris in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century Khams: A Hybrid sMan-ris / sGar-bris

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1. See Jackson 1997.
2. See Jackson 1996.
3. See R. A. Stein 1987, p. 200, who concluded: "D'autres écoles sont encore mentionnées, mais jusqu'ici on n'a guère trouvé de peintures qu'on pourrait attribuer à telle ou telle d'entre elles." See also J. C. Huntington 1990, p. 229: "No documentary or other direct evidence illustrates the features that can identify paintings of either the sMan bris or mKhyen ris schools." See further P. Pal in Singer and Denwood eds. 1997, p. 11: "In the context of Tibetan art, we can hardly give emphasis to the work of an individual artist, for so much of the art is anonymous... It is difficult to assemble a corpus that might define an individual artist's style."
4. Rhie and Thurman 1999.
5. I compiled the following notes in fall, 2000, in response to the earlier request of Mr. Don Rubin for a clarification of the main Tibetan painting styles, especially regarding the Rubin collection. I wrote them while on vacation in Tunisia, spending many a pristine early North African morning in the hotel restaurant going through the *Worlds of Transformation* catalogue with excellent coffee and croissants. I would like to thank Moke Mokotoff for his later assistance on several points.
6. E. Gene Smith 1970. A revised and corrected version of Smith's introduction has been published in E. Gene Smith 2001, *Among Tibetan Texts*, chapter 17.
7. See Jackson 1996, pp. 358 and 361, notes 827 and 828, on the lineage of Wangdrak's father and grandfather.

2. mKhyen-ris
   a. Early mKhyen-ris of mKhyen-brtse and Disciples
   b. The Revival of the mKhyen-ris by the Fifth Dalai Lama
   c. A mKhyen-ris Branch Surviving at 'Bri-gung
3. sGar-bris
   a. Early sGar-bris
   b. Later sGar-bris, Si-tu's Influence
4. Regional Styles
   a. dBus-ris (i.e., E-ris, 1.a.i. above)
   b. gTsang-ris (1.b.i. above)
   c. Khams-ris (mainly 3.b. and 1.b.ii above)
   d. A-mdo-bris (regional variant of 1.a.i?)
   e. Ching Dynasty Court Art (China)

Early Indian-Influenced Styles

These categories leave out the previous, "pre-Tibetan" painting styles, most of which could be classified under the traditional categories of either "East-[Indian] painting" (*shar bris*) or "Newar painting" (*bal bris*). An example of Tibetan "East-[Indian] painting" would be the early sTag-lung bKa'-brgyud paintings, such as catalogue no. 102 (Ru 319). It is wrong (cf. p. 315), to assert that sTag-lung painted lineages usually include Atiśa, for often they do not (Rhie and Thurman 1996, no. 203, is not typical of the corpus). In addition, if the main Phyag-chen (Mahāmudrā) lineage is shown – as is usual – there is no need to qualify the presence of Phag-mo-gru-pa with "perhaps." Phag-mo-gru-pa was sTag-lung-thang-pa's main master and was crucial to his tradition.

For later Tibetans, "Newar painting" (*bal bris*) included not only paintings by Newar artists or their early Tibetan imitators, but also old-fashioned Tibetan styles that resisted the inflow of Chinese art and aesthetic taste even as late as the sixteenth century. One assumes the portrait of Virūpa, no. 83 (Ru 641), p. 280, is an example of true fourteenth-century Bal-ris, but the identification of the lay master above as bSod-nams-rtse-mo is doubtful. He is more likely either Sa-skya Paṇḍita's guru rJe-btsun Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan or his grandfather, Sa-chen.

Regarding the later period of true Newar-style (Bal-ris) painting, Rhie mentions, p. 55, "Jangpukpa Kunga Lekpa" (Byang-phug-pa Kun-dga'-legs-pa) as a guru of Tsongkhapa. (His name was omitted from the index.) In fact, he was a master who flourished in gTsang in the first half of the fifteenth century. The Bal-ris paintings he commissioned thus could not date to the fourteenth century.

Figure 13, cited by Rhie on p. 54 (from Liu I-se 1957, fig. 18), is unlikely to have been Sa-skya Paṇḍita. This iconography with such hand gestures and hand-held objects is not otherwise attested for Sa-paṇ. One also wonders whether the attribution (Rhie 1999, p. 55; Liu 1957, figs. 22 and 24) of 'Bri-gung thangkas to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century is not too early.

With the portraits "Sakya Lama," no. 86 (= Ngor abbot Sangs-rgyas-seng-ge 1504-1569, 11th abbot), and "Master Buddhashri," no. 87 (Ru 269), p. 291 f., we come to later Tibetan continuations of the Bal-ris. Buddhaśrī is an important Tibetan master who transmitted the *Lam 'bras* to Ngor-chen Kun-dga'-bzang-po (1382-1456) in the early fifteenth century. The Lha-mchog-seng-ge of the inscription is the ninth Ngor abbot rGyal-ba Lha-mchog-seng-ge (1468-1535, abbatial tenure 1516-1534) with this distinctive name who commissioned the work.[8]

The main figure Buddhaśrī appears probably in his role as lineage master of the Sa-skya-pa (Ngor-pa) *Lam 'bras* instructions. (He is shown wearing special Tibetan monastic garb, so any speculation about his being an Indian pundit is iconographically impossible). Compare his appearance in the *Lam 'bras* lineages

8. I refer again to the list of Ngor abbots in Jackson 1993, p. 127, my review of Rhie and Thurman 1991.

in no. 189 (Ru 352) p. 468 f. The Indian paṇḍita named Buddhaśrī referred to by Rhie and Thurman (p. 291) played no known role in any later Tibetan school.[9]

The portrayal of three "Sakya lamas," no. 90 (Ru 63), p. 296, is also stylistic conservative for the sixteenth century. Here the main figure at top center identified as Se-ston Kun-rig (a lay master) can only be his ordained disciple Zhang-ston Chos-'bar, who preceded Sa-chen in this *Lam 'bras* lineage. Strictly speaking, it is anachronistic to call the first two masters "Sakya" lamas, though their lineages, it is true, were later mainly transmitted by Sa-chen and his successors.

The portrayal of Great Adept Avadhutipa, no. 44 (Ru 41), p. 219 f., illustrates the penetration of Chinese styles by the seventeenth or eighteenth century in paintings of the Sa-skya-pa school. Avadhutipa appears here as a lineage master of the *Lam 'bras* instructions.

"Ganden Renaissance" or "Ming-Court-Inspired Revolution"?

Bob Thurman in his introductory essay (p. 31 ff.) advances the puzzling hypothesis that a "Ganden Renaissance" took place as a mass movement in Tibetan religious culture from ca. 1400 to the 1640s.[10] His suggestion is perplexing because, as far as I know, such a "Ganden Renaissance" is nowhere attested in Tibetan historical writings, old or new. Even if Western historians or Tibetologists might have overlooked it, could the historically well-informed scholars from Tibet have missed something of such scope and significance?[11]

Thurman's art-historian co-author, M. Rhie, did not adopt the "Ganden renaissance" as a period or descriptive category in her own essays or descriptions, perhaps because it does not represent a coherent period or development in art history. The period in question overlaps two major art-historical epochs, starting (ca. 1400) in the pre-sMan-thang-pa, heavily Indian-influenced, styles (Bal-ris). It includes the transitional styles of the Gyantse stūpa (1430s-1440s), undergoes the sMan-thang-pa revolution (from the 1450s or 1460s), and ends in a Sinicized style of the later sMan-ris (mid to late seventeenth century).

Thurman's thesis is that Tsongkhapa's visions of Ganden (Tushita) heaven in ca. 1400 triggered a massive religious and artistic renaissance in Tibet during the two and a half centuries that followed. He proposes that a "mass movement" took place that also embraced the other main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, thus denying that he is describing essentially just the Gelukpa school's foundation and its eventual winning of political supremacy through a military imposition of a theocracy in the 1640s. One wonders what role the banning of the Gelukpa monks from the Lhasa prayer festival for the first two decades of the sixteenth century or the driving of the Sera and Drepung monks from their monasteries in 1618 would have played in this "mass movement," which ended only in the 1640s when the strongest rival schools were forcibly suppressed – through many confiscations and forced conversions of monasteries – and the main political rivals were eliminated through Mongol-led wars.

Thurman reconstructs in a visionary or intuitive way, without citing historical or art-historical evidence. His sole Tibetan source is the later detailed hagiography of Tsongkhapa cited as "rGyal-dbang Chos-rje" in the bibliography. Thurman proposes a visionary mechanism for artistic developments (p. 36): "... their enlightenments naturally became the basis for a widespread artistic renaissance, as artists of liberated creativity were moved to articulate their visions to a wider world." This is internally consistent with one of the key identifying characteristics he ascribes to the art: "presence of visionary clarity."

The renaissance in the West gave rise to neoclassical styles of art and architecture through the rediscovery of the classical (Greek and Roman) models. For a renaissance analogy to hold in Tibet, one

9. I briefly alluded to this point in Jackson 1993, p. 120.

10. Thurman presented the same thesis in a talk given at the Tibetan studies conference at Bloomington in 1996.

11. Amy Heller 1999, to be sure, called her third chapter "The Tibetan Renaissance (1300-1500)," using the term, as far as I can see, loosely in the sense of "time of flourishing arts," and not seriously arguing for the adoption of such a category. This and her following period, "The Era of the Dalai Lamas (1500-2000)," were nothing more than loose (and, strictly speaking, historically indefensible) rubrics under which she could include many disparate artistic and cultural developments.

would, strictly speaking, expect a kind of Indian Buddhist neoclassicism in Tibetan art of the fifteenth century.[12] Thurman knows this and proposes (p. 36): "In the Tibetan case, the new ideas were the rediscovery ... of the old Indian ideals of Buddhist humanism." But Tibetan aesthetic taste did not experience neoclassicism. It did just the opposite, veering away from the old Indian decorative elements and adopting Chinese art for the depiction of everything except the divine figures themselves. This radical change was the stylistic "revolution" (*not* revival) led by the Tibetan painters sMan-thang-pa and mKhyen-brtse.

The ultimate impulse for sMan-thang-pa's stylistic change in ca. 1450 is not to be sought in the insights or activities of any Tibetan religious master of ca. 1400, but in the generosity and taste of the Ming imperial court in the next decade.[13] The Ming Yongle emperor (reigned 1403-1424), by commissioning exquisite Buddhist artworks and offering them to the leading lamas of Tibet (including one of Tsongkhapa top disciples) whom he invited to his court, sowed the seeds for the coming revolution in Tibetan religious aesthetic taste.[14] For it was Ming Buddhist masterpiece paintings that sMan-bla-don-grub and mKhyen-brtse took, about four decades later, as their main sources of inspiration.

Delayed Penetration of Chinese Styles

The penetration of Chinese landscapes into the backgrounds of paintings that began in the mid-fifteenth century (under the delayed inspiration of Ming-court Chinese Buddhist art) took a long time to replace the older styles completely in central Tibet. They were adopted at first through the spread of various more or less Tibetanized versions of the sMan-ris, and to a lesser degree, through the mKhyen-ris. Then other Chinese models penetrated via the sGar-bris from the mid-sixteenth century on.

Chinese landscapes were not assimilated everywhere at the same speed. Rhie correctly notes that they "reached universal acceptance as settings for deities only from the seventeenth century." Even in the seventeenth century, some connoisseurs such as the Fifth Dalai Lama commissioned "copies" of old art, thus intentionally producing paintings without such landscapes in the backgrounds.

One interesting phenomenon documented by the Rubin collection is the conservative resistance that continued well into the sixteenth century, both in Sa-skya-pa art (where one would have expected it, for example at Ngor) and in paintings of the Karma bKa'-brgyud-pa. I refer to six such paintings:

No. 85 (Ru 457), first half of the sixteenth century
No. 86 (Ru 493), mid-sixteenth century
No. 89 (Ru 162), ca. 1500
Nos. 103-105 (Ru 562, 561 and 536), mid-sixteenth century

Concerning painting no. 103 (Ru 562), p. 317 f., the gSang-'dus Rim-lnga lineage is not the lineage of the whole set, which portrays as main figures of each thangka two lineage lamas of the Phyag-chen (Zung 'jug). The gSang-'dus Rim-lnga is the minor lineage portrayed in only one thangka (Ru 560).

When assessing the penetration of Chinese styles (Rhie 1999, p. 56 ff.), the Sixteen Arhats (or Sixteen Elders, *gnas brtan bcu drug*) should be treated as a special subject. Since this cycle originated from China, by definition it entailed more Chinese influence. One can get a more accurate idea of the extent to which

12. The concept of renaissance in the sense of "enthusiastic cultural renewal and revival of wider learning and interest in the past" has some parallels in Tibetan history, though literary Tibetan does not usually use the literal expressions for "rebirth" (*bskyar skye* or *slar skye*). The closest concept in Tibetan might be "subsequent flourishing" (*phyi dar*), a well-known word in Tibetan Buddhist history originally referring to the reestablishment of Buddhism (*bstan pa phyi dar*) in ca. 1000 after the interruption that ended the period of "early flourishing" (*snga dar*) in the 840s. It is interesting to note that T. G. Dhongthog in his *The New Light English Tibetan Dictionary* (Dharamsala, 1973) uses *phyi dar* when defining *renaissance*: *sgyu rtsal dang yi ge'i phyi dar* ("later flourishing of art and letters").
13. See, for instance, Amy Heller 1999, pp. 142-144, and Robert E. Fisher 1997, pp. 183-188.
14. On the importance of the Yongle emperor for the patronage of Buddhist art, see Marsha Weidner ed. (1994), *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism 850-1850,* p. 52 ff. and 107 f. On the invitation of Tsongkhapa to the imperial court (who declined to come), see E. Sperling (1982), "The 1413 Embassy to Tsong-kha-pa and the Arrival of Byams-chen Chos-rje Śākya ye-shes as the Ming Court," *Journal of the Tibet Society*, vol. 2, pp. 105-107.

Chinese styles have penetrated a given Tibetan school by looking at the backgrounds of more purely Indic iconographic subjects that had no special link with China.

"Shakyamuni Buddha with Life-scenes" (catalogue no. 13, Ru 264, p. 159 f.), is another such iconographic subject that originated from China: a depiction of a Chinese "Hundred Deeds of the Buddha" (*rgya mdzad*).[15] This iconographic cycle, too, should eventually be gathered and investigated as a group. Rhie's description of no. 13 mentions virtually all styles, even the Tenth Karma-pa; however, the painting seems to be by a sMan-ris artist.

1.a.i. MODERN SUCCESSORS TO THE OLD SMAN-RIS IN DBUS PROVINCE

THE SO-CALLED "GELUKPA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL" AND THE E-RIS

In the thangka of "Guru Drakpochey and the Between-State Deities," no. 179 (557), p. 445 f., the clouds are exactly those of a typical sMan-ris of dBus province, central Tibet, of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Note the repeated shape of the clouds and their unshaded outer edges. There is no reason to attribute this painting to Eastern Tibet.

By contrast, "Vaishravana and the Eight Troll Generals," no. 58 (Ru 123), p. 238 f., is *by no means* a typical Lhasa sMan-ris of ca. 1900, which abhorred solid dark-blue skies and would never outline clouds with indigo. I see nothing to support the hypothesis (p. 238) that it was "possibly by an artist working in Lhasa who combined elements of the traditional New Menri and Karma Gardri styles."

The sMan-ris commonly practiced by artists of dBus province was not necessarily the high art of the Dalai Lama's court artists, though the traditions may have overlapped at times. The painting of Śākyamuni with Avadāna legends, no. 14 (Ru 494), p. 159 ff., is attributed to the refined New sMan-ris style of the Lhasa workshops ca. 1900. This depiction of certain episodes from KṢemendra's work is based on sNar-thang blocks, and at first glance it would seem to be a fine gTsang-bris – note the very dark sky above and the shading of clouds. It may be possible in due course to differentiate this possibly "Tashilhunpo court art, ca. 1900 [?]" from "Lhasa court art, ca. 1900," or to verify Rhie's Lhasa supposition. I admit that the style of no. 14 is similar to Jackson 1996, pl. 67, identified by me as in a high court style of nineteenth-century Lhasa.[16]

In "the Fourth Dalai Lama and some previous incarnations," no. 128 (Ru 380), p. 357 f., the main figure is one of the Dalai Lamas, whose glorious spiritual pedigree the thangka portrays. The painting itself probably dates to the mid- or late-seventeenth century and not the eighteenth or nineteenth century. This treatment of clouds as dominating landscape elements is unusual but not impossible for the late seventeenth century. Such a trulku-lineage portrait can hardly be much later than the last historical figure portrayed. Could the vase in the central figure's left hand symbolize a prayer for his long life, as it so clearly does for the facing portrait of the Fifth Dalai Lama (cat. no. 129, Ru 506)? It is understandable that Rhie and Thurman had trouble identifying the main figure. From an iconographical and structural standpoint, one would expect the first *four* Dalai Lamas below, but instead one finds:

	22? Central Figure	
	21?	
18		19
	20	

Inscriptions:

18. Chos rgyal 'phags pa
19. dGe 'dun grub pa [the First Dalai Lama]
20. bSod nams rgya [mtsho] [the Third Dalai Lama]
21? Ngag dbang blo …? rgya mtsho
22? Main figure [no inscription]

15. On the Chinese "Hundred Deeds," see Jackson 1996, p. 133, n. 249.
16. Compare Jackson 1996, pl. 67, with Essen and Thingo 1989, I-12, which also has a fairly light horizon in the landscape.

The inscription beneath figure no. 21 is the Fifth Dalai Lama's name. Note his typical portrait with small mustache (cf. cat. no. 129). So who could the main figure be? The Second, Fourth, or even Sixth Dalai Lama? Comparison with other portraits might help solve this puzzle.[17]

The E-ris as an important Old Sman-ris successor in dBus

E. Gene Smith 1970, p. 46, asserted that the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was the main origin of the later twentieth-century Lhasa or central-Tibetan mode (after blending with "Khyenri, Gadri and later Indian influences"). A similar opinion repeated several times by Rhie is that Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's New sMan-ris later developed into the (Central-Tibetan) sMan-ris "international style." I have found no written source or other authority for either assertion. M. Rhie (1999, p. 68) suggests in the same vein that the New sMan-ris of the Potala murals became a national style for Gelukpa monasteries throughout Tibet, and an international style, spreading also to Gelukpa establishments of Mongolia and China. She describes this as "a handsome and complex style, which can overpower the viewer with its mass of detail."[18]

Against this, I have proposed that the continuation of the New sMan-ris (sMan-gsar) of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was the gTsang-ris, especially at Tashilhunpo, and not the dBus-ris.[19] The typical dBus-ris of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was a continuation of the old sMan-ris (sMan-rnying), for which I presented some evidence in a previous study.[20]

One further term sometimes associated with the later (Old) sMan-ris typical of dBus province is *E-ris*. There was a special connection between the nineteenth-century dBus-ris painters and the district E in southern dBus, for many influential painters and sculptors came from there.[21] The well-known modern artist and authority bsTan-pa-rab-brtan ("Temba Rabden") informed me that his family, the Kha-dog Lho-ma, came from Kong-po-smad village in E.[22] bsTan-pa-rab-brtan's father was bsKal-bzang-nor-bu, son of Tshe-ring-rgya-bo, an important painter patronized by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. Tshe-ring-rgya-bo's father was the painter Padma. bsTan-pa-rab-brtan's paternal (great) uncle was Las-tshan Tshe-ring-don-grub, a senior thangka painter of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama with an official rank, whose photograph in 1937 by C. Suydam Cutting has been reproduced numerous times, most recently by C. Harris 1999.[23] Thus these painters came from E and embodied an E-bris hereditary lineage that has continued down to bsTan-pa-rab-brtan himself.

1.b.i. New sMan-ris of Tashilhunpo, forerunner to the gTsang-ris

Rhie, p. 67, states that the founder of the gTsang New sMan-ri, Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho, was "primarily used for the wall paintings and various paintings and thangkas sponsored by the Fifth Dalai Lama and his teacher the Paṇ-chen Lama..." This is slightly misleading, since Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho was only known to have painted once in Lhasa or dBus province (working on the Potala murals in 1648), but otherwise was exclusively active in his native province, gTsang, mostly at Tashilhunpo.

Similarly, sMan-thang-pa sMan-bla-don-grub is not recorded to have painted for the First Dalai Lama in Lhasa or elsewhere in dBus (Central Tibet). His only recorded murals (and writings) were executed in gTsang.

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17. Cf. the thangka in K. Tanaka (1999), p. 127, no. 54, with bSod-nams-rgya-mtsho as the main figure. Cf. also the block-prints in Doboom Tulku and Glenn H. Mullin (1995), pp. 69-77.
18. Cf. Rhie 1991, p. 62.
19. See Jackson 1993, p. 116.
20. Jackson 1996, p. 345 and n. 779. My assertion seems to have found acceptance by C. Harris (1999), p. 65. Harris's uncertainty (*ibid.*,) about the founder of the New sMan-ris (*sman ris gsar ma*) is simply a confusion of two similar names, [gTsang-pa] Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho and [Karma-pa] Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. The identities of these contemporary painters are now well established (see Jackson 1996, part II, chapters 8 and 9).
21. See Jackson 1996, p. 345.
22. bsTan-pa-rab-brtan, interview, Leiden, 2000. Tiny reproductions of two thangkas by bsTan-pa-rab-brtan ("Temba Rabden") appear in C. Harris 1999, p. 39.
23. C. Harris 1999, p. 89, fig. 38.

The extraordinary Śākyamuni, no. 183 (Ru 75), p. 454 f., is the best example of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's New sMan-ris style in this collection. I would place it in gTsang (probably Tashilhunpo) of the second half of the seventeenth century or early eighteenth century. There is no need to add "or Eastern Tibet" to the description.

The portrait of a Nyingma Lama, no. 68 (Ru 307), p. 258 f., is indeed an example of the gTsang-ris, i.e. a later (eighteenth- or nineteenth-century) successor to Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho's "New sMan-ris." I cannot detect any elements of the Karma sGar-bris modifying it.

I also agree that the portrayal of Tsongkhapa at the center of a Gelukpa refuge tree, no. 191 (Ru 571), p. 473, is probably Tashilhunpo art by a follower of Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje's tradition, just as attributed. Note again the strong preference for faces in partial relief. A careful working out of the lineage lamas above should yield a more accurate dating.

1.b.ii. NEW SMAN-RIS IN THE EIGHTEENTH- OR NINETEENTH-CENTURY KHAMS:

A HYBRID SMAN-RIS / SGAR-BRISHYU

"Green Tara saving from the eight perils," no. 38 (Ru 237), p. 207, is clearly Khams art of ca. the nineteenth century. My hypothesis is that it represents the school of Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tshe-ring that was later called the Khams-bris or New sMan-ris of Khams. Its connection with the New sMan-ris of gTsang remains unknown.

The composition of no. 38 seems to derive from an original commissioned or planned by Si-tu Paṇ-chen: Note the architectural details. But its use of deep blues and greens in the landscape is not typical of Si-tu's own commissions. Some elements such as the crags to the main figure's right and the flowers and leaves beneath her lotus seat hint at a nineteenth-century hybrid sMan-ris / sGar-bris style.

Virupa and the Path and Fruition Refuge Tree, no. 189 (Ru 352), p. 468 f., portrays two different lineages of the *Lam 'bras*: The *Slob bshad* (to the viewer's left) and the *Tshogs bshad* (to the right), that come together in the main lama below (no. 44). Something has gone wrong with the numbering of the later figures in the description (p. 469). Such a dark blue sky was, to my knowledge, rarely used in the best-known Khams styles. (Cf. the dark sky of the thangka of the Eight-Four Adepts [*grub chen*], showing Blo-gter-dbang-po below as guru, in the first Hahn collection catalogue. K. Tanaka 1997, pl. 51.)

2. MKHYEN-RIS

2.a. EARLY MKHYEN-RIS OF MKHYEN-BRTSE AND DISCIPLES

The mKhyen-ris is a rare style. Regarding its founder, mKhyen-brtse of Gong-dkar, Rhie and Thurman (1999, pp. 31; 74, n. 52; 497; etc.) continue to use the mistaken name "Khyentse *Wangchuk*." The school's founder was actually called mKhyen-brtse Chen-mo ("Chen-mo" was his title as master artist and overseer of large projects). No Tibetan source calls him mKhyen-brtse-*dbang-phyug*, and I have tried to clarify the confusion of mKhyen-brtse-chen-mo with Tshar-chen's great disciple mKhyen-brtse-dbang-phyug, to correct the erroneous suggestion of E. G. Smith 1970.[24] No written source links mKhyen-brtse explicitly to either Gyantse or Lhasa monastic universities, though if he was a co-student of sMan-thang-pa (as tradition maintains), he may have studied under gNas-rnying artists and painted at Gyantse alongside sMan-thang-pa.

2.b. THE REVIVAL OF THE MKHYEN-RIS BY THE FIFTH DALAI LAMA AND OTHERS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CENTRAL TIBET

"Guru Rinpoche as Suryaprabha," no. 61 (Ru 675), p. 246 f., is, I agree, an example of the mKhyen-ris. It is probably also seventeenth century, but *not* from eastern Tibet. In uncertain cases, it would be better to list neither provenance rather than both.

"Shakyamuni," no. 2 (Ru 39), p. 138, is said to be mKhyen-ris from eastern Tibet, but this is unlikely. No lineage of mKhyen-ris is recorded to have reached Khams or A-mdo. (Could this painting be from A-mdo?) A mKhyen-ris attribution for the Arhat set, nos. 24-27, seems to me to be even less certain.

24. See Jackson 1996, p. 139 ff., and Jackson 1997, Singer and Denwood eds., p. 257 f.

2.c. A MKHYEN-RIS BRANCH SURVIVING AT FROM THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The 'Bri-gung abbatial history by bsTan-'dzin-padma'i-rgyal-mtshan (1770-1826), a painter and authority on religious art, records that a branch of the mKhyen-ris survived at 'Bri-gung from the late seventeenth century onward. "Padmasambhava Refuge Host Field Tree," no. 193 (Ru 413), p. 476 f., seems to be a later painting from this 'Bri-gung tradition and does not need to be classified as "Eastern Tibetan."[25] Though not in a typical sMan-ris style of dBus, the painting comes from central Tibet and has a 'Bri-gung subject matter. The attribution (p. 477) "non-sectarian" is problematic; is it not a refuge tree for a rNying-ma tradition practiced among the 'Bri-gung-pa? The inscriptions identify masters of the 'Bri-gung tradition.

Incidentally, no. 113 (Ru 362), called "A Drigung Kagyu Lama," portrays a 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud lama with his lineage, though I have yet to work out the exact tradition.

3.a. EARLY SGAR-BRIS

The authors assert (p. 497) in connection with the "Karma Gardri" that most artists painting in the Karma sGar-bris style were followers of the Karma bKa'-brgyud in Khams *and A-mdo*. But Karma sGar-bris painters (like Karma bKa'-brgyud monasteries) were unknown in A-mdo.[26]

The main figure in "A Lama," no. 132 (Ru 418), p. 363 ff., is not a lama of the Gelukpa tradition. He is the twelfth-century Dwags-po bKa'-brgyud master sGom-chung Shes-rab-byang-chub, nephew of sGam-po-pa (1079-1153) and younger brother of sGom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po (1116-1169).[27] This painting is from a series of bKa'-brgyud-pa masters and may date to the late sixteenth or first half of the seventeenth century. The identification of the main figure is only possible from the inscriptions:

2		3
	1	
4		5
6	7	8

Inscriptions:

1. *sgom chung shes rab byang chub*
2. *slob dpon thog med*
3. *rje nā ro pa*
4. *gcung grags mdzes*
5. *sgom zhi mdzes*

sGom-chung Shes-rab-byang-chub is a minor and little-known figure in most contexts, but he did appear as a main figure in a still unpublished thangka series depicting the successive rebirths of the dPal-spungs Si-tu sprul-sku. Could this painting be from an older such trulku-lineage set?

Similar series of portraits with main figures set in elegant (Ming) Chinese landscapes were painted in central Tibet by the early seventeenth century. I have seen photographs of an almost complete set from that period depicting the series of the successive rebirths of the Jo-nang-pa lama Kun-dga'-grol-mchog or Tāranātha.[28] An undated series of 'Bri-gung masters preserved in Limi in the northwestern borderlands of Nepal may also be this old.[29]

25. On the 'Bri-gung painting traditions, see also Jackson 1996, pp. 338-343.

26. Jackson 1996, p. 42, n. 50.

27. A brief biographical mention of sGom-chung Shes-rab-byang-chub is found in rTa-tshag Tshe-dbang-rgyal, *Lho rong chos 'byung*, Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 26 (Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-rnying dpe-skrun-khang, 1994), p. 180.

28. Two thangkas, apparently from this set, were offered at Christies "to benefit a Tibetan monastery in a Himalayan Kingdom." See sale no. 9608 (March 21, 2001) lot no. 161 and 162. One pictured Chos-kyi-nyin-byed (68 x 49.5 cm.) and the other, Dharma-dbang-phyug (67.5 x 49). Though dated "ca. 1800" for the auction, the set appears to be not from the Go-log (Golok) region but from early-seventeenth-century gTsang, i.e. from Jo-nang itself. The size is close to that of certain other Jo-nang-pa thangkas of the period. A larger portrait of Chos-kyi-nyin-byed (80 x 54 cm.)

A major difference between this painting (no. 132) and the portraits of Paṇ-chen Lama successive rebirths attributed by me to Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho is the positioning of the main figure here on the central axis.[30] The composition in no. 132 is balanced and its central figure, relatively small.

The portrait of the Ninth Karma-pa dBang-phyug-rdo-rje (no. 106, Ru 1630, p. 321 f.) should be considered as probably early Karma sGar-bris, but it should not be automatically attributed to Khams. It could also have come from central Tibet. Nam-mkha'-bkra-shis, the official founder of the sGar-bris, did not paint in Khams, but only in dBus, as far as we know.

3.b. LATER SGAR-BRIS, SI-TU'S INFLUENCE

The later Karma sGar-bris style that, from the 1730s onward, flourished again mainly in Khams under the influence and patronage of Si-tu Paṇ-chen was the main subject of my chapter in the *Worlds of Transformation* catalogue (pp. 89-125). Quite a few sets commissioned by Si-tu Paṇ-chen in this style are known, and more continue to appear.

A noteworthy example of the style is the portrait of a then still unidentified "Shamar Lama," p. 87, pl. 4. The mid- or late-eighteenth-century dating I proposed for this thangka agrees with the identity of the main figure I have since been able to establish. His facial features and hand gestures identify him as the Tenth Zhwa-dmar, Mi-pham Chos-grub-rgya-mtsho (1742-1792).

By contrast, the dPal-ldan-lha-mo of the Gelukpa tradition, no. 146 (Ru 179), p. 386 f., is *not* done in a Si-tu style. There is very little that identifies this as from Eastern Tibet.

A small school of painting established in Manali in the Indian Himalayas by Glang-thang-pa Ngag-dbang-rdo-rje (Ngawang Dorje) of 'Phan-po and his pupils seems to follow, primarily, the Karma sGar-bris, which he evidently learned from a sGar-bris (Khams-pa?) painter before leaving 'Phan-po and dBus as a young man.[31] It has been misleadingly called the "Spiti School" by the Himachal Pradesh Tourist Board.[32]

4. REGIONAL STYLES

Tibetan painters commonly distinguished recent styles according to geographical origin, using such terms as:

a. dBus-bris (recent successor to the Old sMan-ris) (1.a.i. above)
b. gTsang-bris (successor to the New sMan-ris of Tashilhunpo) (1.b.i. above)
c. Khams-bris
d. A-mdo-bris (regional variant of 1.a.i?)

(To this one might add styles from outside Tibet proper, such as: e. Ching Dynasty Court art in China and from Mongolian Buddhist painting.)

With few exceptions, these do not replace the above classification according to school, but rather identify where the school had many followers later. Strictly speaking, the regional styles require further sub-classifications, since dBus, gTsang and Khams provinces were all home to more than one school. Still, Tibetans commonly did speak of a style of a given province, referring to its most widespread style.

Ye-shes-'jam-dbyangs (1932-), an old painting master of the 'Bri-gung tradition who originally came from Nyurla (sNur-la) in Ladakh, repeated a traditional list of six regional or local styles:[33]

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survives in a private collection, Cologne, which is stylistically similar to some of the eighteenth-century dPal-spungs sets.

29. Jackson 1996, p. 341. The Drikung painter Yeshe Jamyang said they might date to the time of the 'Bri-gung abbot Chos-kyi-rgyal-po (1335-1407), though he never saw them except in photographs.

30. See Jackson 1996, p. 234 ff.

31. It was not the typical dBus-bris style of 'Phan-po, on which see Jackson 1996, p. 368, n. 831.

32. C. Harris 1997, p. 266 f., and 1999, pp. 11 and 68.

33. Yeshe Jamyang, interviewed on September 9, 1995, at Leh, Ladakh, by Nyurla Ngawang Tsering. Clare Harris 1999, p. 68, has presented this listing in translation or paraphrase, without the original Tibetan wording.

[1] Gyari (*rgya ris*), the painting school of China
[2] Khamri (*khams ris*), the painting school of Khams
[3] Driri (*'bri ris*), the painting school of Drigung ['Bri-gung in northern dBus province]
[4] Tsuri (*mtshur ris*), the painting school of Tsurpu [mTshur-phu monastery in northeast dBus]
[5] Eri (*e ris*), the painting school of E district [in southeast dBus province]
[6] Tsangri (*gtsang ris*), the painting school of Tsang province [particularly at Tashilhunpo]

Often painters differentiated regional styles on the basis of the relative lightness or darkness of their overall color schemes. Ye-shes-'jam-dbyangs, for instance, repeated four traditional descriptions of painting schools:[34]

[1] "Chinese style was like a rainbow in the sky" (*rgya bris nam mkha'i 'ja' tshon 'dra*)
[2] "The painting school from Khams was like the dusk of evening" (*khams ris mun pa rub pa 'dra*)
[3] "The style of E district is like the dawn" (*e bris nam mkha' langs pa 'dra*)[35]
[4] "The painting school from Drigung is like after sunrise" (*'bri bris nyi ma shar ba 'dra*)

Thus, the colors of one non-dBus school, that of Khams, were comparatively dark and muted (like those of the gTsang style), as after dusk has fallen. The styles of two dBus-district traditions were lighter. That of E (the gYe-ris or E-bris of dBus) was, however relatively faint, like the colors at dawn, while those of the 'Bri-gung (the 'Bri-bris) were lighter and "paler" (*skya ba*), like after sunrise.

In the above list, "Khams style" does not refer to the Karma sGar-bris, which was listed above separately as the Tsuri (mTshur-bris) and possessed a light palette. Instead, it refers to a darker sMan-ris / sGar-bris synthesis the predominated in many parts of Khams by the early twentieth century (presumably the style of such nineteenth-century painters as Chab-mdo Phur-bu-tsher-ring and his followers). This darker Khams style may be represented by catalogue nos. 38 (Ru 237), 67 (Ru 678), 116 (Ru 276), and 187 (Ru 367).[36]

Wangchuk (dBang-phyug) of Ladakh similarly contrasted the main (Old sMan-ris) painting tradition typical of the whole of dBus province in central Tibet with his own gTsang (New sMan-ris) style:[37]

The colors of dBus are like dawn.
The colors of gTsang are like dusk.

In actual practice, the relatively lighter or darker colors can be detected most easily in the skies. Such nutshell characterizations are useful for differentiating the central-Tibetan sMan-ris traditions, but they should not be used without other stylistic criteria.

The late painter Wandrak (dBang-grags, 1925-1988) from Shel-dkar in western gTsang similarly stated that the early-twentieth-century Lhasa style (here referring primarily to an Old sMan-ris, the E-ris) was overall much lighter than the gTsang style of Tashilhunpo (the New sMan-ris). For the coloration of clouds, its artists used only blue and green, whereas red- and orange-tinged clouds were also possibilities for Tashilhunpo artists. Lhasa artists preferred perfectly balanced compositions, while Tashilhunpo artists often sketched compositions that were not symmetrical. He added that Lhasa artists typically used to space very evenly the five skulls or the five golden *rigs-lnga* ornaments on the heads of deities. Some Tashilhunpo

34. Yeshe Jamyang, interviewed on September 9, 1995, at Leh, Ladakh, by Nyurla Ngawang Tsering. Cf. Clare Harris 1997, p. 268.
35. Yeshe Jamyang explained that the style of E district was the painting tradition of the Lhasa government (*lha sa'i gzhung gi ri mo*). Cf. C. Harris 1999, p. 69, who seems to have not understood "*e ris*," but only its gloss, "*dbus ris*."
36. Another example is K. Tanaka (2001), p. 94 f., pl. 39.
37. Wangchuk (dBang-phyug) of Ladakh (interview Leh, 31 July 1977): *dbus gi tshon ni skya mda' 'dra/ gtsang gi tshon ni sa rub 'dra/*. Wangchuk had studied (in ca. the late 1960s or early 1970s) under Dawa Pasang (Zla-ba-pa-sangs), an old master of the Tashilhunpo tradition.

artists would, by contrast, place the three central ones closely together, while leaving a wider gap between them and the two outside ones.[38]

4.a. DBUS-BRIS

The predominant regional style of dBus has been briefly touched on above in section 1.a.i. as later successors to the Old sMan-ris in dBus province. Some typical examples have been published.[39] It is essential not to confound this recent Central-Tibetan continuation of Old sMan-ris with the different traditions known as "New sMan-ris," as some have done.[40] It might lessen the confusion to call it the E-bris, after its origin in E district in southern dBus.

4.b. GTSANG-BRIS

One of the recent styles that should not be too difficult to document is that of gTsang, successors to the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho especially at Tashilhunpo. Two great painters of this school have published painting manuals that feature color illustrations.[41] Some typical earlier examples have also been published from Ladakhi collections.[42] (Most dGe-lugs-pa monks from Ladakh who received a higher scholastic training did so at Tashilhunpo, their mother monastery or *gdan sa*, and this gave rise to other cultural links.)

The painter Phuntsok Sangpo (Phun-tshogs-bzang-po), one of the outstanding gTsang-bris proponents of the last generation, enumerated in his recent manual three styles – dBus-bris, gTsang-bris and Khams-bris – stressing the need for each style to retain its distinct identity.[43] His manual makes clear the richness and complexity of the gTsang-bris tradition, within which three distinct traditions could be discerned:

1. The tradition of Bro-khyung.[44] This tradition possessed slightly more rocky crags and streams, but relatively fewer clouds and flowers.
2. The tradition of Rigs-bzang-lags, the master painter of sKyid-bde-shar. This was basically a gTsang-style, to which certain excellent elements from Chinese painting (*rgya bris*) had been added.
3. The tradition of Phuntsok Sangpo's teacher, bSod-nams-stobs-rgyas, in which crags, streams, clouds and flowers were widely depicted. The colors were applied intensely, and the bodily proportions were authentic.[45]

Phuntsok Sangpo studied thirteen years under bSod-nams-stobs-rgyas, youngest son of the famous gTsang-bris painting master dBu-chen 'Jigs-med-lags. 'Jigs-med-lags also had two older sons (Phun-tshogs-dbang-rgyal and sPen-pa-rgyal-po), and he participated in the painting of murals during the renovation of the Jo-khang in Lhasa in the time of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. 'Jigs-med-lags's teacher was the renowned painter Blo-bzang-dpal-'byor, a monk painter of Tashilhunpo who was the disciple of dBu-chen Grags-pa-chos-

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38. Wangdrak, interview Rajpur, 1982. Presented in Jackson 1996, p. 358 and n. 821.
39. For thangkas of yi-dam deities, see for instance Essen and Thingo 1989, vol. 2, nos. II-305, 306 and 315.
40. C. Harris 1999, p. 68 f., was understandably confused by informants who indiscriminately used "New Menri" for all recent (hence "new") continuations of the sMan-ris. This leads her to consider (p. 68) the *New Menri* to be a misnomer and to state (p. 69) that the dBus-ris is a Mew Menri style. It would be better to classify the twentieth-century dBus-ris (E-ris) as an "*Old* Menri School of Central Tibet" (as she quotes on p. 65 Rigzin Paljor's book as doing). Cf. also G. Beguin 1995, chart p. 72 f., which shows all recent sMan-ris as "sMan-ris gsar-ma," evidently following S. and J. Huntiongton 1990, p. 614 f.
41. Phuntsok Sangpo 1996 and Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs, bKa'-chen 1993.
42. Acarya Ngawang Samten 1986, nos. 3-8 and 13-19. The first group is wrongly identified as "Sgar-bris style," and the second group, depicting the famous Paṇ-chen Rinpoche set (thangka 13 is the same composition as cat. 131, Ru 477), is just called "Sman-bris."
43. Phuntsok Sangpo 1996, p. 19. His painting of a Nyingma assembly field, executed in 1971, was published in C. Trungpa 1975, no. 23, p. 73.
44. The name Bro-khyung is unknown to me. 'Brong-rtse and Nor-bu-khung-rtse are places in the Myang-chu valley southeast of Tashilhunpo.
45. Phuntsok Sangpo 1996, p. 18.

'phel. Grags-pa-chos-'phel, in turn, painted thangkas for a previous incarnation of the Paṇ-chen Rinpoche (in the mid to late nineteenth century ca.).[46]

Phuntsok Sangpo participated in 1945 in the renovation of the Sa-skya Lha-khang-chen-mo, for which about eighty painters were summoned from other parts of gTsang, including sTod (Shel-dkar, etc., in western gTsang), Lha-rtse,[47] Bo-dong and rTse-gdong.[48] rTse-gdong Lha-bris dBu-chen dBang-'dud-lags, the chief overseer of painting in the project, remarked at the time on the purity and authenticity of Phuntsok Sangpo's gTsang-bris style.[49]

gTsang-bris painters had a fondness for asymmetrical compositions. Their landscapes commonly included snow-capped peaks on one side (which were rarely painting in the dBus-bris), and they had a special way of shading clouds in the sky and clinging to the tops of hillsides (cat. nos. 14 and 131). Note also the use of pink clouds in both.[50]

A group of gTsang-bris painters was summoned on at least one occasion in the 1930s to work at Lhasa in dBus, at which time they picked up some traditional pigment usage from the painters of dBus province.[51] At least one prominent sMan-ris painter from Khams claimed to follow the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-rgya-mtsho.[52]

4.c. KHAMS-BRIS

In recent centuries no single style enjoyed a monopoly over the whole of Khams. Instead, several styles coexisted, of which two were more typically Khams-pa or "eastern": 1., the sGar-bris (3.b, above) and 2., the Khams-bris, a sMan / sGar hybrid (1.b.ii, above). In both of these, a stronger Chinese influence via the sGar-bris is obvious in comparison with the central-Tibetan sMan-ris styles, old or new. In addition, some painters in Khams worked in varieties of a third tradition: 3. sMan-ris styles that remained closer to those of dBus province. And some outstanding Khams-pa painters may even have followed the New sMan-ris of gTsang.[53]

Sometimes the three main styles coexisted not only in the same Khams district but even in the same painter. The painter Blo-bzang-'jam-dbyangs (b. 1929) from Re-sgang village of Cha-phreng district in southeast Khams, for example, stated that in his homeland three painting styles were followed:[54]

1. sMan-ris (close to that of dBus in Central Tibet)
2. Khams-bris (the hybrid Khams style)
3. Karma sGar-bris

He claimed he could paint in all three. Cha-phreng artists commonly were called to both Li-thang and rGyal-thang to paint.

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46. Phuntsok Sangpo 1996, p. 17. The Paṇ-chen Rinpoche in question might have been the fifth, Blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i-dbang-phyug (1855-1882). For an eighteenth-century gTsang-bris painting of the Paṇ-chen Lama series of rebirths, see Erberto Lo Bue 1998, p. 38 f., pl. 13.
47. Lha-rtse rdzong in western gTsang was in the mid-twentieth century home to about fifteen or sixteen painters who followed a more conservative and provincial gTsang-bris tradition. See Jackson 1996, p. 367, n. 826. Lha-rtse was already a home for painters by the 1430s, the time of the painting of the dPal-'khor stūpa in Gyantse.
48. On painters from rTse-gdong in recent generations, see Jackson 1996, p. 357, and p. 367, n. 816.
49. Phuntsok Sangpo 1996, p. 18. rTse-gdong Lha-bris dBu-chen dBang-'dud-lags was assisted at Sa-skya by the dBu-chung Zla-ba-don-grub and 'Jam-dbyangs. He is mentioned in Jackson 1996, p. 357, as "Jo-lags dBang-'dus-lags of bDe-skyid-gling village in rTse-gdong."
50. Jackson 1996, p. 246, n. 545.
51. Jackson 1996, pp. 358 and 367, n. 824.
52. C. Harris 1999, p. 65, quotes the Dharamsala monk painter Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes (b. 1929) as stating he was a follower of the New sMan-ris of Chos-dbyings-(rgya-mtsho). Indeed, the thangka attributed to a pupil of "Sangay Yeshi" published in Harris 1999, p. 63, possesses some of the hallmarks of the gTsang-ris, such as asymmetrical landscape composition and presence of a snow mountain on the horizon. Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes in a 1992 interview claimed to have begun learning painting with "the best painter in Khams." What a pity this important painter's name, residence and origin were not recorded!
53. C. Harris 1999, p. 65. See the previous note.
54. Blo-bzang-'jam-dbyangs of Cha-phreng, interview Dharamsala, 1996.

Similarly, Namgyal G. Ronge in his article on art and style in Tibet published in 1982 enumerated those same three painting styles, listing also their main seats in exile at that time:[55]

1. dBus-bris (= sMan-rnying), followed in Dharamsala (seat of the Dalai Lama and his exile government)
2. Karma sGar-bris, followed at Rumtek, Sikkim (seat in exile of the Karma-pa)
3. sMan-gsar or Khams-bris, followed at Tashijong (seat in exile of the Khams-sprul)

Ronge, son of the outstanding painter Rang-dge bsTan-'dzin-yongs-'du from Lha-thog Khams-pa-sgar in Khams (original seat of the Khams-sprul), differentiated between several Khams styles, identifying a few paintings as "sMan-ris of Khams,"[56] though erroneously asserting (p. 341) that one painting from the sGar-bris tradition of dPal-spungs and Si-tu was a mixture of sGar-bris and sMan-bris. He also repeated the assertion that the New Menri led to the Lhasa court style, though it is not clear on what authority.

The painting of Guru Rinpoche's Copper-Mountain Paradise, no. 192 (Ru 111), p. 474 f., is attributed (p. 476) to nineteenth-century successors to Zhu-chen's sMan-ris school in Derge. But sMan-ris schools do not allow a painter to shade with indigo the outer edges of clouds or to leave a horizon unpainted in this way. This is clearly a later Khams Karma sGar-bris, though with a landscape darker green than normal.

It should be noted that the painting illustrating an episode of Zhu-chen's life presented in my book of 1996 does not represent a sMan-ris style.[57] Indeed, Zhu-chen's own main collaborators Lha-dga' and his brother were from Karma Lha-steng and would be expected to have followed a Kar-shod-pa style, i.e. a Karma sGar-bris style preserved near Karma monastery in Chamdo county (*rdzong*).

The depiction of the Buddha's birth at Lumbini, no. 11 (Ru 572), p. 155 f., is correctly identified in the catalogue as following an original printed from Derge. But these block-prints were used as models all over Tibet, and one has to differentiate clearly the block-print from a painting based on it. Therefore it is not sure the painting is from "Eastern Tibet, Kham, Derge"; indeed, the coloring speaks against this. Solid dark blue is not known to have been used in Derge for skies. If this basically sMan-ris painting is from Khams, then perhaps it came from a more provincial center of art.

Other attributions to "Derge" are based on this one piece, all with solid ultramarine skies: no. 126 (Ru 38), no. 127 (Ru 56), and no. 180 (Ru 210). See also no. 6 (Ru 414), p. 146, "touches of ultramarine could indicate link with Derge schools," though this is surely Karma sGar-bris of Khams. On p. 494, glossary under "Derge school," a tradition by that name was asserted to have been an important school of painting that flourished in Derge in recent centuries (cf. also p. 71, col. 1). Such a "Derge school" is unknown to Tibetan authorities known to me. Since the nineteenth century, at least two styles flourished in the Derge kingdom: the Khams-bris (of Phur-bu-tshe-ring) and the sGar-bris (of nearby dPal-spungs). I cannot classify these provincial-looking paintings, though they are certainly not in the two high styles patronized by the Derge kings and lamas.

I wonder why "White Vajradhara Father-Mother," no. 167 (Ru 382), p. 424 f., is said to be "Eastern Tibetan (?)."The dark blue sky make one immediately suspect a gTsang sMan-ris. The same may apply to the paintings of Mila Repa's life, nos. 100 and 101 (Ru 180, 183), p. 312 ff. In any case, they are definitely not in the Karma sGar-bris of Khams: the skies are too dark.

The authors refer to "The Fourth Shamarpa," no. 110 (Ru 2), p. 328 f., as "Eastern Tibetan, second half of the 16th century." This is probably an early-sixteenth-century portrait and "biography" of the Fourth Zhwa-dmar painted by a follower of the sMan-ris. It is *not* an example of an early sGar-bris. See also the portrait of probably the same Zhwa-dmar (see p. 85, pl. 3), which was seemingly made in about the same

55. Namgyal G. Ronge (1982), p. 334. This early attempt at classification has, strangely enough, been completely overlooked in later studies. A still earlier attempt, A. Neven (1978), pp. 42-25 and 51, nos. 26-28 and 42-45, confused dBus-bris and gTsang-bris; see Jackson 1996, p. 366, n. 807.

56. Ronge 1982, p. 337, spoke for example of a (Khams) sMan-ris popular in Ri-bo-che, Nang-chen and sGa-khog.

57. Jackson 1996, p. 313, pl. 63.

time as the autobiographical thangka and may represent an early central-Tibetan sMan-ris of about the same period.

Rhie (p. 68) compares another Zhwa-dmar portrait (Rhie and Thurman 1996, no. 113) with the Tenth Karma-pa's paintings in the context of Eastern Tibetan styles of the second half of seventeenth century. It would be better to leave out the Tenth Karma-pa from such stylistic discussions since he was a special case, not mainstream in any sense. He left no school behind and his eccentric style is not known to have had imitators.

Rhie's remarks, p. 68, about stylistic developments in the second half of the seventeenth century in eastern Tibet remain highly hypothetical and, as she readily admits, the styles are still "difficult to assess for this period." It would be better to leave out "eastern Tibet" as a category for pre-eighteenth-century works until several typical examples have been firmly dated and attributed. Even then, "Eastern Tibetan" remains too broad, if one cannot specify whether from Khams or A-mdo.

4.d. A-MDO-BRIS

A-mdo was home to the famous painting center of Re-bkong, one thangka of which has been documented by K. Tanaka (1999), p. 150 f., no. 67. We are also fortunate to have photographs (by Rob Linrothe) of scroll-paintings from this tradition from no later than the 1940s available on the tibetart.com website. Rob Linrothe has finally put this tradition on the map with a detailed article on its recent history ("Creativity, Freedom and Control in the Contemporary Renaissance of Rebgong Painting," *Tibet Journal*, vol. 26-3/4, 2001, pp. 5-91).

The distinctive features of some later sMan-ris paintings from A-mdo seem to include a love of symmetry in the overall composition and outlined clouds with trailing tails and bright pastel colors. Pointed mountains sometimes loom prominently on the horizons of landscapes. Skies are a nearly uniform (i.e. mostly unshaded) dull dark-blue.

A few more paintings from A-mdo have already been published in *Bod kyi nang bstan lha ris kyi sgyu rtsal* (mTsho-sngon, mTsho-sngon mi-dmangs dpe-skrun-khang, 1987, reprinted 1994), color plates 4-7. Note that the four thangkas reproduced on the front and back of the dust jacket (Buddha Śākyamuni, Avalokiteśvara, Tsongkhapa and Padmasambhava) are in a different style, evidently that of gTsang Tashilhunpo and dKa'-chen Blo-bzang-phun-tshogs. The paintings in the Rubin collection from A-mdo almost certainly include no. 126 (Ru 38) "Tsong Khapa and Life Scenes," and possibly no. 2 (Ru 39) "Shakyamuni."

My previous tentative attribution of one painting to A-mdo (Jackson 1996, p. 105, fig. 35) may need correcting to the nearby border district of rGyal-mo-rong, southeast of A-mdo. (The late "A-mdo Lha-bzo" Jamyang, some of whose work was reminiscent of this style, came not from A-mdo proper, but from nearby rGyal-mo-rong.) My attribution as "seemingly painted by an artist from A-mdo" has been followed by Rhie and Thurman 1999, fig. 30.

Regarding "Scenes of the Avadana Kalpalata," no. 10 (Ru 250), p. 154, Rhie states, "This more closely resembles some A-mdo works. The coloring is dominated by olive-yellow green." Rhie, p. 69, similarly notes a difference between some later copies of Si-tu Paṇ-chen's *rTogs brjod dPag bsam 'khri shing* paintings, suggesting that some were from A-mdo. She may be right. At least the paintings seem to come from somewhere in the far-eastern borderlands of Tibet. The artists have copied Si-tu compositions, but they were not trained in a true sGar-bris style of Khams or mTshur-phu. It is good to distinguish copies from within a tradition from those coming from without. Here, judging by the facial features, the painters worked in a provincial style from some Sino-Tibetan border region.

4.e. Ching Dynasty Court Art (China)

The elegant painting of a Gelukpa lama no. 135 (Ru 286), p. 368 f., is not eastern Tibetan art. The fields of evenly distributed stylized clouds mark it as a late Sino-Tibetan work done in the Ching imperial court style documented by Theresa Tse Bartholomew.[58] Note that this was the style called "Kadampa" by Chogyam Trungpa 1975, p. 16.

58. Theresa Tse Bartholomew 1997, p. 104 ff.

A work possibly from northwestern China or Mongolia is no. 58. Its obviously foreign flavor marks it as from somewhere outside the "Central Regions Tibet."

Conclusions

There is danger in trying to force all extant paintings into the Procrustean bed of the few well-known traditional stylistic categories. Where no firm documentation exists, silence may be preferable. We are still at the beginning of such studies, and whatever mistakes we make may well be repeated forever.

In the same way, circumspection is needed when making regional attributions. Why even speculate if hard evidence is lacking? At the very least, one should first work out and then articulate a few rules of thumb for identifying each regional school, with the knowledge that such criteria may not work with hybrid styles or certain special iconographic types.

On the other hand, too much caution brings paralysis. Thus Rhie's suggestions should be welcomed for what they are: brave attempts to expand the frontiers of stylistic competence in a field that has stagnated too long.

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TIBETAN TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SELF, PART II: THE TEACHINGS OF THE EIGHT GREAT CONVEYANCES

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If one had to name a single contribution as most representative of the wide-ranging Tibetological interests for which our friend and mentor E. Gene Smith is universally admired, an appropriate choice would be his renowned introduction to the 1970 facsimile edition of Kong-sprul's *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Shes bya kun khyab mdzod*).[1] There, he introduced a generation of scholars to the great revival of Buddhist learning in 19th century Khams, the "Ris-med movement," and to its leading exponents, 'Jam-dbyangs Mkhyen-brtse'i dbang-po (1820-1892) and 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813-1899). Thirty years after its initial publication, the ramifications of Gene Smith's pioneering essay continue to shape our perceptions of later Tibetan Buddhist history.[2] Its influence was very much reinforced in particular by the determination with which, during his years of service to the U.S. Library of Congress in New Delhi, he encouraged the publication of the leading works of the great Ris-med masters, including, above all, Kong-sprul's *Five Great Treasuries* (*Mdzod chen lnga*).[3]

I was, of course, among those whose formation in the study of Tibetan Buddhism during the early 1970s came strongly under the influence of the stellar regions that Gene Smith first explored. In particular, I was very much intrigued by the treatment, in the writings of the Ris-med masters, of the leading approaches to the cultivation of religious experience that characterized the main lineages of Tibetan Buddhist tantrism and yoga, the so-called "eight great conveyances that are vehicles of attainment" (*sgrub pa'i shing rta chen po brgyad*). In an earlier article, I surveyed in brief the structure of 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul's encyclopædic treatment of these, the *Treasury of Instructions* (*Gdams ngag mdzod*).[4] That article may serve (and indeed was originally drafted) as an introduction to the translation that follows, drawn from the detailed catalogue (*dkar-chag*) of the *Treasury of Instructions.* 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul provides here in turn succinct accounts of the chief teachings of each of the eight conveyances. His discussion covers the same ground as does the analogous section of the *Treasury of Knowledge,* but much more concisely.

Given the nature of its contents, the passage translated here could be expanded by virtually limitless annotation – indeed, the entire *Treasury of Instructions* might well serve as commentary! My approach to annotation in this case, however, is minimal, and I have added primarily just those explanations required for basic understanding. These are most often gleaned from the *Treasury of Knowledge.* In my article mentioned above, the reader may find references to some of the relevant secondary literature.

The Instructions of the Eight Conveyances: Translation[5]

In general, though it appears that here, in the land of snows, a great many major and minor traditions belonging to lineages of attainment have emerged, those renowned as "the eight great conveyances" are preeminently comprehensive, or well-established. As the great learned and accomplished master Prajñāraśmi [i.e. 'Phreng-po gter-ston Shes-rab-'od-zer, b. 1517] has said:

The lord of creatures (Avalokiteśvara) in the land of snows, as prophesied by the Conqueror,
Was the sole intention of the unique teaching
Of the ancient religious king, the single divine monarch,
Who was the Second Teacher in this glacial enclosure.[6]
And the eight great pillars, upholding the lineages of attainment in this northern land, were:
The definitive translator, Pa-gor Bai-ro-tsa-na;
The prince of the Conqueror's line, 'Brom-ston the layman;
The great learned and accomplished master, Khyung-po Rnal-'byor-pa;

The great bilingual guru, 'Brog-mi;
The lord of yogins, venerable Mar-pa;
Dam-pa rgya-gar, who dwelt on the plain of attainment;
The translator of Gyi-jo;
and learned and accomplished O-rgyan-pa.
These eight great pillars, [upholding] the lineages of attainment in this glacial enclosure,
Were well-descended from the glorious Vajradhara.
Theirs is the legacy of former accomplished masters —
Those desiring liberation should follow their paths.

Just so, the magical display of the lords of the three families, renowned as the three ancestral religious kings of Tibet,[7] who came forth successively, were most gracious, wondrously generating the enlightened attitude and [engaging in] enlightened activities. Thus it came about that the solar light of the Conqueror's teaching pervaded the dark valleys of the snowy land. The heart of the teaching that thus emerged is [found in] the eight great conveyances that are lineages of attainment.

1. Snga-'gyur Rnying-ma, "the Ancient Translation School"

In general, the Rnying-ma, or Ancient Translation School, possesses a great many meditational sequences belonging to each of the three yogas of the inner tantras of skillful means, which figure among the divisions of the nine vehicles.[8] Nonetheless, they may be concisely summarized in this pair: representational and nonrepresentational [forms of meditation]. It says in the *Three Stages* (*Rim gsum*):

There is said to be a twofold distinction:
The stage of representational meditation
And the meditation of suchness.

Therefore, in the present instance, we shall set forth as the root the meditational sequence of *Atiyoga*, the highest pinnacle of the nine vehicles, which is final among the trio of [the stages of] creation, perfection and Great Perfection (*Rdzogs-pa chen-po*). If [the expression "Great Perfection"] is explained on the basis of the term *mahāsandhi*, it is "great concentration" (*mahāsamādhi*), or, it is "great absorption" (*mahādhyāna*). It therfore has the significance of "unsurpassed pristine cognition," in which all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa naturally arise in the expanse of the unique abiding nature [of reality], surpassing the intellectualized doctrinal systems of the eight [lower] vehicles. As to its divisions, it says in the *Great Array* (*Bkod-pa chen-po*):

The Mental Class is for those involved in thought,
The Spatial Class for those involved in space,
And the Esoteric Instructions are for those who are free from sequential exertions.

Just so, it is well-known that the Great Perfection has three classes according to the relative degrees of profundity whereby it makes naturally emergent pristine cognition into the path.

Among them, the exoteric Mental Class (*sems-sde*) is liberated from the extreme of renunciation, for one has realized that all phenomena have transcended causal and conditional effort and attainment in the play of mind-as-such alone. Among the subdivisions [of the Mental Class] there are seven, such as that which holds the result to be the original locus of mind.

The esoteric Spatial Class (*klong-sde*), free from activity, is liberated from the extreme of antidotes, for one has realized that, because all phenomenal manifestations neither arrive in nor depart from the space of Samantabhadrī, there is no getting away from the expanse of the naturally present Three Bodies.[9] There are four [subdivisions of the Spatial Class] the trio of White, Black and Variegated; and the Infinite Expanse.

The secret and profound Esoteric Instructional Class (*man-ngag-sde*) is free from the extremes of both renunciation and antidote, for one has realized that particularly characterized mode of being wherein the significance of all phenomena – ground, path, and result – is the indivisible union of primordial purity and spontaneous presence. This has three [subdivisions]: Oral Discourse, Random, and that which is Taught in the Unique Texts of the Tantras. As it says in the *All-Accomplishing King* (*Kun-byed rgyal-po*):

The six vehicles of definitive attainment
Are taught to be error in the Great Perfection.[10]

So it is that the objects adhered to in the sūtras and in the inner and outer mantras, up to and including Anuyoga, are all merely tenets grasped by the intellect. For this reason, [the Great Perfection] clearly teaches the particular ways whereby one falls into the error of not seeing the original abiding nature of reality just as it is. The pristine cognition of the Great Perfection transcends the eight aggregates of consciousness,[11] including thought and speech, cause and result. It is that great freedom from elaboration, in which all mind and mental events attain to peace in the expanse [of reality]. Because the naturally emergent reality of awareness, free from activity, the natural disposition of the great transcendence of intellect, itself abides in its self-possession and is otherwise uncontrived, the appearance of its expressive power as ephemeral taint passes away, naturally dissolving into the natural expanse. For these reasons, this way is particularly superior to all of the lower philosophical and spiritual systems. For as it says in the *Tantra of the Great Natural Arising of Awareness* (*Rig-pa rang-shar chen-po'i rgyud*):

Ema! The Great Perfection that is Ati
Falls into no partiality at all;
Self-emergent, the point of its action is pristine cognition.
As, for example, the predatory lion
Vanquishes all beasts of prey,
So the natural articulation of the Great Perfection vanquishes the lower vehicles;
The natural articulation of the Great Perfection gets right to the heart of the matter.

Beginning thus, it teaches at length the uncommon, definitively secret view and meditation. Moreover, the *Great Array of Ati* (*A-ti bkod-pa chen-po*), after teaching at length the manner in which [the Great Perfection] is especially exalted above view and meditation involving adherence to conceptual investigations, says:

Therefore, this nucleus of the definitive secret
Is like a lamp compared to the dark,
An elephant compared to a cow,
A lion among the beasts,
Or a horseman among pedestrians;
It is especially exalted above all.

This is illustrative of what [the Great Perfection] extensively reveals.

Concerning the essential points of the path: The Great Perfection possesses the unsurpassed instructions of the fourfold liberation, which is a special doctrine.[12] In particular, obtaining the empowerment of the expressive power of awareness, that belongs to the secret cycles of the Esoteric Instructional Class, one whose faith and commitments have not declined, and who cultivates the daytime and nighttime yogas to the extent possible, even if failing to reach the original ground of liberation during this lifetime, will achieve the great inspiration of the eleventh level, Universal Light, at the time of release from the bonds of the body, owing to the blessing of the lineage of awareness holders and the power of the truth of reality, having first beheld the emanational fields of the ten directions immediately upon practicing the recollection of emanational fields [during the intermediate state following death]. This is taught in the *Great Array of Ati*:

During the last five centuries, the Age of the Dregs,[13]
This secret nucleus will appear in the human world.
The fortunate individuals who become its adherents,
Before whom this nucleus appears,
Will all pass to the unchanging level.
If, because during the Age of the Dregs,
life is short and illness plentiful,
You don't attain confidence in the significance of the nucleus,

Then, beholding this, great inspiration will be realized
On the eleventh level, Universal Light, the field of emanation,
Where, through purely miraculous birth,
one becomes free from the bonds of the womb.

2. Bka'-gdams, "the School of Transmitted Precept and Instruction"

The tradition of precepts of the sole divine master of the land of snows, the glorious venerable lord Atiśa, has as its significance the realization of the totality of the conquerors' transmitted doctrine as the esoteric precepts whereby an [ordinary] individual may become a buddha. It is said that its lineage holders are adorned in body with four deities, adorned in speech with the three baskets of doctrine, and adorned in mind with the three higher trainings.

The four deities are: the master of the teaching, Śākyamuni; the master of loving kindness and compassion, Avalokiteśvara; the remover of outer obstacles, Tārā; and the remover of inner obstacles, Acala. Because the three baskets are the expression, and the three higher trainings, the expressed meaning, they are combined together [as a single group of three],[14] making seven divine doctrines of which [the Bka'-gdams-pa] are well-known to be the masters. [Their teaching] has come down in the three [categories of] Textual Tradition (*gzhung-pa*), Instructional Tradition (*gdams-ngag-pa*) and Esoteric Precept Tradition (*man-ngag-pa*).

Concerning the first of these, the Textual Tradition: the *Garland of Birth Stories* (*Jātakamālā*) and the *Collection of Purposeful Sayings* (*Udānavarga*) are the texts generating faith; the *Compendium of Lessons* (*Śīkṣāsamuccaya*) and the *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*) are the texts teaching conduct; and the *Bodhisattva Level* (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*) and the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Greater Vehicle* (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*) are the texts of meditative concentration. The practices of study and teaching focus preeminently upon those six.

Concerning the Instructional Tradition: One is guided with reference to the four truths of suffering, origination, cessation, and the path in both their emergent and reverse order. And in the Esoteric Precept Tradition, there is the experiential cultivation of the *Precious Volumes of Secret Doctrine* (*Gsang-chos glegs-bam rin-po-che*). As it says in that text (*gzhung*):

Remember the guru, who is the object of refuge.
Make body the nature of divinity,
And continually employ speech in mantra-recitation.
Think on beings without exception as parents.
Examine the abiding nature of mind as emptiness.
Directed by the rudder of these five,
You will reach the purification of all fundamental virtues!

Thus, the path is formed by the Sixteen Seminal Points (*Thig-le bcu-drug*) of conventional and absolute reality that are derived from these five recollections of guru, deity, mantra, compassion and emptiness.[15]

The Textual and Instructional Traditions are taught in unison in the venerable Atiśa's composition, the *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* (*Byang-chub lam-gyi sgron-ma*).[16] Because, until liberation and omniscience are attained, there is no way not to enter into this tradition of the path, it is famed as the sequence of the path of enlightenment (*Byang-chub lam-rim*), or the sequence of the path of the three persons (*Skyes-bu gsum-gyi lam-rim*). Its expressed meaning is given in that text (*gzhung*):

One must know there to be three persons:
Lesser, middling and superior.[17]

Accordingly, "person" is equivalent to [the Sanskrit] *puruṣa*, which refers to potency. Therefore, it is with reference to one who has the potency to achieve the goals of future lives, and so forth, that one speaks of "person" in this context. At the very outset, the manner of adhering to a spiritual benefactor and the difficulty of obtaining this ease and endowment [that characterize a fortunate human birth] are the foundations for the paths of all three [types of person], and so are taught as the prerequisites. Then, as sublime Nāgārjuna has said:

First, the doctrine of higher stations,
Later, that by which definitive attainment is won;
For, having obtained the higher stations,
Gradually one comes to definitive attainment.[18]

Accordingly, at the outset, turning from obsessive attachment to this life one gains the potency to realize what is to be accepted and rejected with respect to deeds and their results, in order to obtain worldly happiness for oneself alone – such is the lesser person. The actual practice of this one's path consists of the four cycles [of doctrines] whose objectives are impermanence, the consequences of the evil destinies, going for refuge, and deeds with their results.

Then turning from obsessive attachment to the whole of saṃsāra, for the sake of liberation from it, one gains the potency to realize the path of the three [higher] trainings in the appropriate manner – such is the middling person. Here, with respect to vehicles, there are both those of the pious attendants (*śrāvaka*) and self-centered buddhas (*pratyekabuddha*). With respect to the objects of meditation, there are the four truths and dependant origination, the coarse and subtle [contemplations of] the selflessness of the individual, et cetera.

Perceiving the two extremes of being and quiescence to be flawed, one gains the potency to bear the burden of arraying all creatures on the level of the buddha – such is the greater person. Here, with respect to views, there are the Middle Way (*Madhyamaka*) and Mind Only (*Cittamātra*), and, with respect to vehicles, the divisions of both sūtra and mantra. Proceeding from the distinctive feature of the path, namely, the generation of the enlightened attitude, these teach the manner in which one trains, in general and in particular, in the conduct of the Conquerors' offspring, along with the result [of that training].

Generally speaking, the expression "three persons" occurs in some [Indian śāstras] such as the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* and the commentaries on the *Abhidarmakośa*. The sequences of experiential cultivation are explained in the two *Ornaments* [i.e. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* and *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*], in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, etc. The significance [of those śāstras] is condensed [in the Bka'-gdams-pa teaching of the three persons]. Indeed, all of the transmitted precepts that were well-spoken by the Conqueror are gathered together in these three sequences of the path. The types of spiritual training involving the instructions for exchanging self and other, that are the quintessence of the experiential cultivation taught in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, etc., [as expressed] primarily in the three [groups of] Indian texts of lord [Atiśa's] three gurus,[19] are the culmination of the three path sequences, the root objects of meditation on the path sequences, and the root objects of meditation for the path of the greater person. This, the relative enlightened attitude, is an especially exalted means for deriving the profit of concentration, which involves loving kindness and compassion.[20]

3. Lam-'bras, "the Path and its Result"

The lord of yogins, Virūpa, experientially cultivated and realized the perfection stage of the three continua of Hevajra, and composed a text of esoteric instructions about it. That aural lineage is renowned as the Precious Oral Teaching of the Path with the Fruit (*Gsung-ngag rin-po-che lam 'bras-bu dang bcas-pa*), possessing four epistemic authorities.[21] Here, there are four ways of guiding disciples by means of the four[22] epistemic authorities and four features of the aural lineage.[23] Referring to this guidance that is firm and extensive, in accordance with the texts, the venerable, great Sa-skya-pa[24] has said:

With the three visions [establishing] the path's ground,
The entire experiential cultivation may be known through the three continua.

Accordingly, in laying out the ground of the path, with reference to the impure vision (*ma-dag-pa'i snang-ba*), which is first among the three visions that are taught in common with the vehicle of the transcendental perfections, one cultivates conviction regarding the evil consequences of saṃsāra, the difficulty of obtaining the ease and endowment [of the human condition], and cause and effect with respect to deeds (*karman*). In this way the path of the pious attendant (*śrāvaka*) is fulfilled. With reference to the vision of spiritual

experience (*nyams-kyi snang-ba*), the yogin engaged in the practice taught in common [with the vehicle of the transcendental perfections] cultivates loving kindness, compassion and the enlightened attitude, and thus fulfills the common path of the Greater Vehicle. The yogin engaged in the uncommon [vehicle of mantras] cultivates the path of the Vehicle of Indestructible Reality (Vajrayāna), whereby s/he knows that all the inconceivable visions of spiritual experience that arise are subsumed in fifteen [categories]. Cutting off all elaborations, s/he comes to recognize them whenever they occur, and so maintains the conquest of whatever arises. Referring then to the pure vision (*dag-pa'i snang-ba*), one recollects the enlightened attributes of the buddha, such as the inexhaustible wheel of ornament attained in the phase of the result, and thinking that "I myself will arrive at such achievement," one cultivates enthusiasm. By cultivating these [three visions] one purifies the continuum of mind.

At the beginning of the uncommon path of mantra, one receives the empowerment of the causal phase and abides in the fundamental commitments. As for the three continua of the actual path, with respect to the causal continuum of the universal ground (*kun-gzhi rgyu-rgyud*), one is introduced to and cultivates the view of the indivisibility of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the coalescence of limpidity and emptiness. In the methodical continuum of the path (*lam thabs-rgyud*), four paths emerge in relationship to the four empowerments: the path of the vase empowerment consists of the outer and inner stage of creation, and, receiving the empowerment of the path phase, one cultivates the profound path of its significance during four daily sessions; the path of the secret empowerment consists of vital energy (*rlung*) and inner heat (*gtum-mo*); the path of the wisdom empowerment is another's body as messenger; and the path of the fourth empowerment consists of the waves of indestructible reality (*rdo-rje rba-rlabs*) — by cultivating these three (latter) paths of the stage of perfection the exemplary and actual pristine cognitions (*dpe-don ye-shes*) are revealed. By thus cultivating the four paths, in the mundane path the four views, including the three essences, emerge, and on the transcending path, having run through the four limits of achievement, the five bodies of the continuum of the result (*'bras-rgyud*) are disclosed.[25]

In brief, one prepares the ground of the path by means of the three visions, experientially cultivates the actual practice by means of the three continua, resolves doubts by means of the four epistemic authorities and four aural lineages, and determines the boundaries of the path by means of the five causal coincidences.[26] When one has thus undertaken its experiential cultivation, then, according to the guidance of the extensive path, having come to know the three occasions in which the elements are gathered, one becomes skilled in the seven esoteric precepts that bestow benefit and in the means to remove obstacles, and, experientially cultivating them, arrives at the limit of proof.[27] According to the guidance of the medium path, there are five basic topics, and in the condensed path they are gathered in an enumeration of four.[28] In any case, starting with the phase of the path, the result is present in so much as it is attainable. Therefore, because [this tradition] teaches the significance of the indivisibility of ground, path and result, it is renowned as the Path and Result.

4. Mar-pa Bka'-brgyud, "the Succession of Mar-pa's Precepts"

Among the great accomplished masters, the promulgators adhering to the lineage of the transmitted precepts of lord Mar-pa the translator, the tradition of the precepts of venerable Nāropa and Maitrīpa, there still exists an oceanic totality of esoteric precepts primarily associated with the unsurpassed yoga, transcending what can be indicated in speech. Nonetheless, if one summarizes the foremost points of meditation, they are subsumed in the path of skillful means, the Six Doctrines of Nāropa (*thabs-lam nā-ro chos-drug*), and the path of liberation, the Great Seal (*grol-lam phyag-chen*). Both are gathered by three great, adamantine bonds; for as it says in the *Brief Clarification of the Five Sequences* (*Rim-lnga bsdus-gsal*) and in the *Later Handbook* (*Ka-dpe phyi-ma*):

> The abiding nature of reality, the path,
> And the sequence whereby the result is born …

Thus, the ground is the abiding nature of reality, the path is the sequence to be traversed, and the result is the way of disclosure. Among them, abiding nature includes both the abiding nature of the reality of the

body,[29] and the abiding nature of the reality of mind. Each is further divided as coarse, subtle or extremely subtle, thus forming the ground for purification.

The path includes maturation and liberation, among which the conferral of empowerment matures the continuum [of the disciple's body-and-mind] in accordance with whatever may be his or her degree of capacity – superior, middling, or inferior. Proceeding thereafter, the beginner experientially cultivates the liberating [stages of] creation and perfection alternately and, after having thus practiced, simultaneously.

With respect to the stage of perfection, too, both the path of means and the path of liberation are experientially cultivated as purifiers that accord with the ground of purification, whereby the result – consisting of such common ones as the ten signs, eight attributes, four enlightened activities, etc., and the supreme accomplishments including the seven limbs, eight lordships, four bodies, and five pristine cognitions – are actually obtained in this lifetime or in the intermediate state, according to the distinctions of fortune and effort.[30]

Concerning, then, the path of means, the Six Doctrines: relying on the means, such as bliss, this is a profound and quick path that discloses the pristine cognition of the Great Seal. It is the experiential cultivation undertaken by those who are of sharp acumen and are energetic, that has come down through the tradition of the injunctions of glorious Nāropa. The foremost foundational grounds [for the visualization practices of the stage of creation that must precede the stage of perfection] are Cakrasaṃvara, Hevajra, Mahāmāya, Vajracatuḥpīṭha, and Guhyasamāja, which are the "five special tantras," and Kālacakra, which is universal. Because this [teaching of the Six Doctrines] is the consummation of their intention, it is well-known as the "path of means related to the tantras." As it says in the *Genuine Proof of the Transmitted Precepts* (*Bka' yang-dag-pa'i tshad-ma*):

> They are inner heat, action seal,
> apparition, dream, and luminosity,
> The intermediate state, transference,
> and the "penetration of the city."

Just so, it is well-known that the inner heat is the root of the path, the action seal is the derivation of profit on the path, the apparitional body is the path's tree of life, dream is the measure of warmth on the path, luminosity is the heart of the path, the intermediate state is resolution on the path, transference is an invitation along the path, and the penetration of the city is the continuity of the path. Among them, inner heat, the apparitional body, dream, and luminosity are renowned as the "four root doctrines," which form the profound path that discloses the coalescence of no-more-learning in a single lifetime. For those unfortunates who do not disclose the result in this lifetime by means of them, the precepts of the intermediate state and transference are added to make six doctrines. The action seal and penetration of the city are the limbs providing a derivation of profit and continuity, and so are not counted separately.[31]

The foregoing follows the account of Lord Sgam-po-pa and is adhered to by all the Dwags-po Bka'-brgyud [schools] as if with one voice. The many other ways of dividing and combining them may all be subsumed in that explanation. For instance, Lord Mar-pa held them to be summarized as "four doctrinal pairs pertaining to the achievement of buddhahood"; Rngog-pa, father and son, made the essence of the six doctrines into the two [categories of] intermingling and transference; venerable Mi-la-ras-pa spoke of the introduction to the eight intermediate states; Te-pu-pa held there to be four pairs with eight aspects; and Ras-chung-pa held there to be either a triple cycle of intermingling, or a ninefold cycle of intermingling and transference.[32]

As for the path of liberation, the Great Seal, according to the approach of this precious lineage there are both a tradition that accords with the sūtras, according to which one enters into balanced absorption following the instructions on witholding subjective mentation with respect to the objective luminosity that is free from elaboration; and a tradition that accords with the tantras, which is distinguished by emphasizing the adamantine body and the pristine cognition that is born perforce of the Great Seal of bliss-and-emptiness, the yoga of co-emergence. The latter has already been mentioned above. Concerning the former: It has come down primarily from the tradition of the injunctions of lord Maitrīpa. Its essence is the non-dual pristine

cognition that is profound and limpid, pervading all saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and it is endowed with three distinctions.[33] If it is explained etymologically on the basis of the term *mahāmudrā*, it is a seal (*mudrā*) because none of the phenomena of saṃsāra, nirvāṇa or the path surpasses it; and it is *great* (*mahā*) because no phenomena are superior to it. The compound [*mahā-mudrā*] expresses their coreferentiality. It may be subdivided into the trio of the Great Seal of ground, path and result. Concerning the first: because liberation and bewilderment have arisen according to one's realization or non-realization of the significance of the phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa, nothing surpasses that [abiding nature]; and it is "great" because, besides that, there is no other body of reality to be sought out. As for the second: because, even while experientially cultivating that to which one has been introduced through the esoteric instructions of the guru, neither knowledge nor knowables surpass its radiance, it is a "seal"; and because, besides that, there is no other pristine cognition of the Buddha to be sought out, it is "great". Third: because, when the enduring nature of the ground is disclosed after ephemeral taints have been removed by the path, no aspect of the play of body and pristine cognition surpasses its essence, it is a "seal"; and because it is the culminating level, it is "great".

Moreover, concerning coemergence, there are [the teachings of] both "natural coemergence" (*rang-bzhin lhan-skyes*) and "coemergence [realized through] the 'bliss of melting'" (*zhu-bde lhan-skyes*). Of them [the first] is not merely the inferential and discursive meditation that, at the limits of investigation, fails to obtain [a determinate being as its object], but is called [the "yoga of comergence"] because it brings about a union (*yoga, sbyor-ba*) with genuine coemergence, having made a path of nonconceptual direct perception; for it is free from the conceptual grasping of unimpeded appearance-and-awareness. As the venerable Sgam-po-pa has said:

> The trio of mind, thought and the body of reality
> Are coemergent from the very first:
> Is this not called the "yoga of coemergence"
> Because their union is established by these instructions?

Regarding the experiential cultivation of that path, Tilopa says:

> Aho! This is self-presenting pristine cognition,
> Beyond verbalization, outside the intellect's range.
> I, Tilopa, have nothing to teach:
> Adducing this by oneself, within oneself, it may be known.

Just so, having recognized the ground, the abiding reality of the view, one experientially cultivates it by the meditation of the path in the manner of Tilopa's well-known "six doctrines":[34]

> Not reflecting, not thinking, not examining,
> Not meditating, not minding, establish a natural disposition.

This comes to the same point as does Maitrīpa's *Doctrinal Cycle of Non-intellection* (*Yid-la mi-byed-pa'i chos-skor*). The venerable Sgam-po-pa, above and beyond that, relied on lord Atiśa's composition, the *Second Armor of the Great Seal* (*Phyag-chen go-cha gnyis-pa*), and the system of guidance of the Bka'-gdams tradition [and so redacted the teaching as follows:] there is the fourfold preliminary yoga,[35] which gives rise to meditation in those in whom it has not arisen; the three introductions,[36] which bring it on to the path when it has arisen; and the means to bring forth the profit of it, which generate the qualities of enlightenment. In this way, without regard to gradations of [the disciples'] acumen, the guidance is all-pervadingly maintained, so that when the continuum [of mind] is trained, even those of inferior acumen are transformed so as to become superior and therefore naturally liberated. This is an unsurpassed instruction, skilled in such means.

Among the followers [of the Mar-pa Bka'-brgyud tradition], the glorious Phag-mo-gru-pa and 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten-gsum-mgon, father and son, emphasized the instruction of the *Fivefold* [*Great Seal, (phyag-chen) lnga-ldan*]; the glorious Karma-pa matured and liberated beings by means of the *Four-pointed Wheel of Reality* (*gnad-bzhi chos-nyid-kyi 'khor-lo*) and the *Introduction to the Three Bodies* (*sku-gsum ngo-sprod*); among the glorious 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud, the Upper Tibetan 'Brug-pa (*stod-'brug*) [taught] *Eight*

Great [Systems of] Guidance (*khrid-chen brgyad*) and the Lower Tibetan 'Brug-pa (*smad-'brug*) [taught] the *Fivefold Austerity* (*thub-pa lnga-ldan*); and the root Bka'-brgyud guided [their disciples] by means of the path of the six cycles. As illustrated here, the four great, eight lesser and all of the numberless traditions proceeding from them appear to have arrayed many disciples in the state of attainment; and thus they give rise to faith alone.

5. Shangs-pa bka'-brgyud, the "succession of the precepts of Shangs"

Khyung-po Rnal-'byor, a learned and accomplished master who was endowed with the "five culminations," received fully the essential wisdom of a hundred and fifty Indian paṇḍitas and siddhas, and so came to be renowned as one unrivalled in his knowledge of limitless approaches to the doctrine. In general, therefore, one cannot make a one-sided estimation of the extent of his teaching. Nevertheless, in accord with the widely renowned traditions of the uniquely sealed lineage of his successors,[37] there are five "golden doctrines" of the Shangs-pa:

A. The roots are the "six doctrines of Niguma."
B. The truck is the "Great Seal."[38]
C. The branches are the "three means for integrating ordinary experience with the path."
D. The flowers are the red and white forms of the Sky-faring Goddess, Khecarī.
E. The fruit is the realization that body and mind are deathless and without deviation.

These precepts were recorded by Khyung-po Rnal-'byor on the basis of the *Stanzas of Indestructible Reality* revealed by the primordial buddha Vajradhara and by Niguma, the *ḍākinī* of enlightened awareness. Therefore even the meditation topics and the prayers of supplication were never fabricated, altered or corrupted by the mundane thoughts of ordinary individuals, and for this reason are like refined gold.

A. The Six Doctrines of Niguma

With reference to the six doctrines, the *Stanzas of Indestructible Reality* say:

> Matured by the four empowerments,[39] endowed with faith and with vigor,
> Practicing the preliminary meditations upon impermanence, disgust with saṃsāra, and its hazards,
> Whoever strives at this supreme path
> Will attain buddhahood within six months, a year, or during this lifetime.

Accordingly, an individual who is spiritually matured by receiving the empowerments of the five tantras that are taught in the *Great Tantra of the Ocean of Jewels,* or of the maṇḍala of glorious Cakrasaṃvara, and who has received the transmitted blessing of each of the Six Doctrines and has practiced well the common preliminary meditations, first purifies herself or himself by the meditation called the *purifying enclosure of emptiness formed by the syllable A*. Then, the six doctrines may be practiced in turn:

(a) By the practice of the *path of skillful means* the warmth of well-being naturally blazes.
(b) By the practice of the *apparitional body* attachment and aversion naturally dissolve.
(c) By the practice of the *lucid dream* the subtle bewilderment that underlies all bewilderment is naturally cleansed.
(d) By the practice of the *radiant light* ignorance is naturally dispelled.
When these four methods are established as the root of one's practice, the afflictions that arise in the bewilderment of the four mundane states of being are removed.[40] The remaining two doctrines, then, are,
(e) the *transference of consciousness,* whereby buddhahood is attained without having realized it during meditation in this lifetime, and
(f) the yoga of the *intermediate state,* whereby the Buddha's body of perfect rapture is realized.

These are practiced as appended meditational sequences for those who are lacking in vigor and acumen, whereupon, according to the grades of excellence, mediocrity, or inferiority, one becomes liberated in one or another of the three intermediate states.[41]

B. The Great Seal

The learned and accomplished master Khyung-po Rnal-'byor-pa was exceedingly proud of the *Stanzas of Indestructible Reality* that contain the precepts of the essential point that is incapable of intellectual formulation. Therefore, he inserted the paper rolls [on which they were written] into a small Nepalese amulet-box to wear around his neck. Thus the precepts became renowned as the *Amulet-box Precepts of the Great Seal* (*phyag-chen ga'u-ma*). One first cultivates tranquility (*zhi-gnas, śamatha*) and insight (*lhag-mthong, vipaśyana*) through the preliminary practice of the "natural disposition of body, speech, and mind" (*rang-babs-gsum*). Then, in the actual ground of the practice, the calling-down of the diamond-like pristine cognition causes one to steal a glimpse that introduces [the Great Seal], whereupon, through the natural dissolution of the four faults,[42] all doubts with respect to the nature of mind itself are resolved. In the final practice one sustains the Three Bodies, which have emerged spontaneously, and, by relying on the extraordinary means of deriving profit from the practice and removing obstacles, the Great Seal, which is the heart of the doctrine of all sūtras and tantras, and the essence of all meditational precepts, becomes fully manifest as the natural liberation which is [the realization of] the Four Bodies.

C. The Three Carry-overs

By carrying over all phenomena of appearance, sound and thought on to the path, through the essential understanding that in actuality [they are] the guru, the deity, and apparition, in a matter of months or a year [one realizes the unity of] clarity and emptiness as supreme bliss and the Three Bodies are naturally realized.

D. The White and Red Forms of Khecarā

By means of particularly exalted supplications and meditational topics one arouses the solar- and lunar-colored [forms of] the Victoriously Transcendant Vajra-Woman, whereupon the Inner Heat of the unity of bliss and emptiness, which is based on both passion and its dissolution in the four centers, blazes up. Supported by that one comes to voyage in the space of supreme coalescence.

E. The Realization that Mind is Deathless and Unerring

The body is set on the path of spiritual freedom through [the practice of] thirty-two yogic exercises by which deathlessness is achieved. Because one's own mind is primordially unborn it is established to be deathless and supremely liberated in and of itself. The bodily mass, which is the fruit of karmic ripening, is an assemblage of inanimate matter, devoid of any basis for a determination of birth or death. In fact, if one has confidence based on the realization that the body itself has arisen as a mere mental projection, and that the mind is devoid of birth or death, then bodily form becomes fixed in the Great Seal, the boundless expanse in which there is no erring due to bewildering appearances, as the embodiment of the divine. It is taught that through even some of these precepts the embodiment of coalescence (*zung-'jug-gi sku*) may be attained during this lifetime, and that by merely hearing them one may achieve buddhahood in the Conquerors' Body of Perfect Rapture during the Intermediate State. It says in the *Stanzas of Indestructible Reality*:

> Those who experience this supreme path in practice,
> During this lifetime or the Intermediate State, but not at some other time,
> Naturally realize the Three Bodies in the indivisibility of emptiness and bliss,
> And go forth to journey in utterly pure space.

It appears that of the doctrines of the ḍākinī of pristine cognition Sukhasiddhi only the most profound *Six Doctrines of the Path of Skillful Means* (*thabs-lam chos-drug*) and the *Great Seal [precepts of] Pure Pristine Cognition* (*phyag-chen dag-pa ye-shes*) remain. The *Sādhana that Includes Four Deities* (*lha-bzhi dril-sgrub*), a precept of the mahāsiddha Rāhula, and [the precepts of] the *Efficacious Lord of Pristine Cognition*,[43] a profound doctrine of Maitrīpa, also still exist. These appear really to possess a continuous transmission of spiritual experience and blessing.

6. Nyon-myongs Zhi-byed, "the Pacification of Affliction"

Concerning the significance of the term *zhi-byed*: according to the ways of guidance that were introduced in Tibet, having first turned the disciple away from the path of nonvirtue, one primarily causes the afflictions

of the mental continuum to be purified, whereby bodily baseness, disease, etc., resulting from previous deeds, are provisionally pacified. Thus, because one has been made to bear up to the engagement in yoga, this is called the "genuine doctrine of the pacification of suffering" — that is, the general denomination ["pacification"] has come to apply to the particular [tradition called "Pacification"]. As it says in the *Mother* [i.e. the *Transcendental Perfection of Discernment*]:

The mantra that well-pacifies all suffering ...

And in the *King of Tantras* [i.e. the *Kālacakra Tantra*]:

Pacifying the pain of the three sufferings ...

The name [of this tradition] is coined on the basis of such sayings.

In essence it is [the teaching of] the transcendental perfection, but harmonized with mantra. Thus, it is a special precept that combines into one the profound essentials of all sūtras and tantras. Generally speaking, the lord among accomplished masters, Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas, took command of the sound and significance of the unborn mantric phonemes, and by means of inconceivable secret [knowledge], in accord with the dispositions and faculties of those requiring training, he revealed limitless gates of doctrine, [expressed in] symbol, word and meaning. Therefore, his cannot be established to be a single tradition. Nonetheless, [he always taught that] the disciples must possess the three fundamental vows in accord with their respective careers.[44] The path is extended by means of austerity. And the result is conduct on behalf of others. In these three respects the guidance [according to the various traditions of Pacification] is generally in accord.

[Pha Dam-pa] originally composed the *Triple Cycle of the Lamp* (*sgron-ma skor gsum*), teaching the three higher trainings as the concise means of experiential cultivation for those of inferior, middling and superior acumen. Here in Tibet, the first among the three renowned descents of his injunctions – earlier, middle and later – was the "Kashmiri tradition," in which all of the instructions of fifty-four accomplished men and women were condensed into five essential points illustrated by five examples. The middle [descent] consists of the traditions of Rma [Chos-kyi-shes-rab, b. 1055], So[-chung Dge-'dun-'bar, 1062-1128] and Kaṃ [Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan, d. 1119], among which the tradition of Rma, relying on the lineage of meaning, confers the introductions by means of sixteen [instructions that are like being] guided by the hand. Then, relying on the lineage of the word, one's doubts are resolved through sixteen major points. In the So tradition, the introduction is conferred in superior, middling or inferior ways, to those who are endowed with the three essential points concerning resting in absorption, whereupon one undertakes experiential cultivation, being endowed with the ten bonds.[45] In the Kaṃ tradition, despite the emergence of a very extensive tradition of guidance, in later times it appears that only guidance on the significance of the *Heart Sūtra* survived.

The final descent of the injunctions is the tradition of the bodhisattva Kun-dga'.[46] This is the esoteric precept of the Transcendental Perfection of Discernment, in harmony with secret mantra, whose root is the introduction of innermost meaning that applies to the continuum of mind, whose means are adorned with many virtues of causal coincidence, so that this is an esoteric precept for the experiential cultivation, at one time, while on one seat, of all the teachings of the buddha. With reference to this, called the *Methodical Cycle of the Taintless Drop* (*Dri-med thigs-pa phyag-bzhes-kyi skor*), one begins by conferring the four profound symbolic empowerments that uniquely belong to this tradition and which cause the maturation of [the disciple who is as yet] an immature foundation. Then, proceeding down the lane of the white red and black systems of guidance, spiritual experience that has not emerged is caused to emerge. One makes the blessings of the guru into the path, which causes realization that has not arisen to arise. To cut through the elaborations that have not been cut through, one impresses the meaning on the mind by means of a mass of words. Having summarized it thus, the actual guidance accords with the esoteric precepts of the "seven complete sittings":

(a) Those of superior acumen directly perceive the uncontrived, abiding reality of mind in its natural state, which transcends apprehending subject and apprehended object. Thus, there is the White Guidance, whose essential point is the naked perception of awareness, and which brings about the realization of buddhahood all at once.

(b) The middling refine the seminal points of the three gates and their equal combination, completing the path of the guru's four bodies. Thus, there is the Red Guidance, whose essential point is the decisive exercise of devotion, by which the four bodies are attained in an all-surpassing leap.

(c) Because the least obtain the five paths whose entrance is gradual, there is the Black Guidance, whose essential point is the resolution of the subtleties of instruction. Among these three (a-c), this last includes [five subdivisions]:

(c.1) The Path of Provisions is brought forth through spiritual refinement that relies on the experiential cultivation of the five paths in a single sitting, having condensed the instructions of the outer [vehicle of] definition into eight sections and a single root.

(c.2) The Path of Connection is weighed according to the measure of austerity, having relied on the completion in a single sitting of the five sequential paths in which the motile vital winds blaze up and are grasped [in accordance with] the father tantras.

(c.3) The Path of Seeing resolves the aftermath, by relying upon the complete meditation of the four seals in a single sitting,[47] the experiential instructions of bliss [according to] the mother tantras.

(c.4) The Path of Meditation brings forth the profit by means of the common savor, having relied on the complete meditation on four yogas in a single sitting, or on four concentrations,[48] which are the instruction of innermost significance.

(c.5) The Culminating Path of Freedom from activity is then attained, having relied on the complete meditation in a single sitting of the six-limbed yoga, the instruction of the natural liberation of awareness.

This way, which had not formerly arisen in India or in Tibet, is the special doctrine of Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas: outwardly, the revealed heart of the three baskets; inwardly, the jugular of the four tantras; secretly, the eye-opener of the innermost significance. In reality, having released the seal of the transmitted precepts of the ḍākinīs, the measure of the attainment of the experiential cultivation of the entire teaching of the Buddha during a single sitting is present here; and it is adorned with many superiorities of the causal coincidences of its methods, as it says in the *Path Sequence* (*lam-rim*) of Zhig-po Nyi-seng:

The salt of the lineages of attainment in general,
  The measure of the attainment of the great sequence of the path,
The kiss of the esoteric precepts of all sūtras and tantras,
  [Is found] in nothing else but this.

A further limb of that [Pacification] is the genuine doctrine that is renowned as the Demon Cutting Object (*bdud-kyi gcod-yul*). If one denominates it on the basis of that with which it is in positive agreement, [it is so-called because] the unsurpassed tantras teach many definitive orderings of conduct as the ways of deriving the profit, for instance, "secret conduct," and "conduct of awareness."[49] It says in the Mother:

One who wishes to practice the conduct of the profound transcendental perfection of discernment must learn the following ...

Because it is the practical application of what this signifies, it has been labeled the "Object of Conduct."

But if one denominates it as the antidote to that which it opposes, it is so-called because, in the causal phase of the transcendental perfections, one carries on to the path the truths of suffering and origination by means of acceptance and rejection with respect to the four truths in their evolutionary and reverse sequences, whereby one experientially cultivates the profound essential points of the antidote, i.e. the meditation opposing [the afflictions] and [the realization of] the equal savor, so that this is the Demon Cutting Object. As for the word and meaning of "cutting," it says in the *Small Text* (*Gzhung-chung*) of the brahman Āryadeva:

Because it cuts to the root of mind,
Cuts out the five poisonous afflictions,
And cuts through all meditation involving extreme views,

Troubled conduct, hope and fear,
And also arrogance,
The term is ascertained to mean "cutting."

As for the meaning of "Object": the reason is that, because the afflictions that are the matter to be cut off are born from mental involvement in inappropriate objects, yogins become engaged in those objects so as to arouse the dispositions, whereupon they cut right through them.

Here, among the four Indian texts that spread in Tibet, among which are found both the "Male Cutting" and "Female Cutting" derived from the lineage of Pha Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas, it is the latter [the "Female Cutting"] that universally prevails nowadays. And here, first and foremost, is the "lineage of the experience of accomplished masters" that was obtained from Ma-gcig, who was liberated in direct response to the precepts. The textual basis for the view is the Transcendental Perfection of Discernment and the peculiarity of its method is distinguished by mantra, so that it is held to be an intermingling of the realizations of sūtra and mantra. As for the fundamental source of this path, it says in the *Verse Summation of the Transcendental Perfection of Discernment* (*Prajñāpāramitāsaṃcayagāthā,* verse 237):

Through four causes the skillful bodhisattva is empowered
So that s/he is hard for the four mārās to vanquish, immovable indeed:
These are abiding in emptiness, refusal to renounce sentient beings,
Action that accords with word, and the possession of the Sugata's blessing.

Thus, one experientially cultivates the four points that are taught here: a view that abides in emptiness; compassion that won't let go of sentient beings; the discipline of a bodhisattva who acts in accord with word; and the blessing that is conferred by the Sugata.

As for the first, a view that abides in emptiness: at the outset, one abandons the view that the aggregates of which one's continuum are formed constitute a self, and, with regard to any other sentient beings whatsoever, one does not engage in perceptions of substance and mark; thus, one always abides in the significance of selflessness.

Concerning the refusal to let go of sentient beings: one is especially loving towards corporeal beings who are miserable, diseased, etc., and even regarding incorporeal spirits and demons, one avoid harmful thoughts; and with great compassion turns [all those] back from harming sentient beings, thereby introducing them to the path of enlightenment.

Acting in accord with word: renouncing coarse conduct, one generates the enlightened attitude and avoids contradicting what one has thereby assented to.

The blessing that is conferred by the Sugata: having gone for refuge, one prays with fervent devotion to the root and lineage gurus. On that basis, at the beginning of one's experiential cultivation of the instructions, one obtains the uncommon empowerments [to make one] a worthy recipient.

In the actual ground [of the practice] of the instructions, there are the tradition of the sūtras, the tradition of the mantras, the intermingling of the realization of sūtra and mantra, etc. — these being the general sources of the entire tradition of transmitted precepts. In the uncommon preliminary practice, one gathers the accumulations inwardly, by means of the body, and invokes the direct descent of blessing through fervent prayer. In the actual ground [of the practice], relying on the pursuit of awareness alone, one seeks out the pith of mind. Causing [the disciple(s)] to be seated in appropriate order, one teaches the means of absorption. Relying on the opening of the sky-door, the significance of the Mother is introduced. Absorbed in equipoise, one guards the natural disposition that is without speech, thought or utterance, and so attains the Body of Reality during a single sitting. In the aftermath [following meditative absorption], as it says in the *Bundle of Injunctions* (*Bka'-tshoms*):

One cuts off the entanglements of obstructive objects,
Then cuts off the entanglements of unobstructed mind,
And cuts off the entanglements of hankering for fun.
The māras are divided as four,
But are subsumed in the demon (*bdud, māra*) of pride.

Thus, one cuts off the four māras, having freed oneself from hope and fear, renunciation and acquisition, subject and object. With respect to that which it is difficult to cut through, one fearlessly presses on until it is cut. Taking one's seat in a fearsome retreat,[50] as a method for deriving the profit, one exerts oneself in [the practices appropriate for] fearsome retreat, endowed with the instructions. When [fearful conceptions] are aroused to the fullest extent, one intermingles the expanse [of reality] and awareness and, by means of the visualized offering of one's body as food – the white dispensation, red dispensation, variegated dispensation, etc.[51] – in which pacification and wrath are mixed, positive and negative thoughts become equalized in a single savor. Thus, demons seen outwardly and the ego grasped inwardly are delivered over to the limit of selflessness, on which occasion one fulfills the complete measure [of this practice]. In the end, having acquired the three great confidences,[52] the stages and paths are automatically traversed to their completion.

7. Ṙdo-rje'i rnal-'byor, "the Yoga of Indestructible Reality"

The meaning that is concealed by the expressions of indestructible reality in the synoptic tantras of the unsurpassed [yoga], such as the *Cakrasaṃvara* and *Hevajra*, is clearly revealed in the glorious *Kālacakra* system, including the *Paramādibuddha*, is this yoga of the great seal, called the "six-limbed yoga" (*ṣaḍaṅgayoga*). It is the supreme, culminating destination of all stages of perfection. Concerning the manner of guidance on this path, it says in the *Taintless Light* (*Vimalaprabhā*):

> The Transcendent Lord [Buddha] has taught three sorts of belief with respect to this mantra vehicle: at first, for the moment, one has belief in the tantra; then, belief in the guru; and then belief in oneself. In these three, the path of the authentic and perfect buddha is entirely complete.

Accordingly, endowed with these three sorts of belief, the path leading to union with the supreme accomplishment is made pure. The object of attainment is the indestructible reality of pristine cognition, the three secrets of the Tathāgata ['s body, speech and mind].

Concerning the Six-limbed Yoga of Attainment (*Sgrub-byed sbyor-ba yan-lag drug*), it says in the *Root-tantra of Kālacakra* (*Dus-'khor rtsa-rgyud*):

> The six limbs of yoga are held to be
> Withdrawal, absorption,
> Breath-control, so too restraint,
> Remembrance and concentration.[53]

Similar sayings are also found in the *Guhyasamājottaratantra* and in the *Ḍākārṇava*. The manner of attainment [that is taught here consists of] attainment by means of the four limbs of service and attainment (*bsnyen-sgrub yan-lag bzhi*).[54] Thus, with reference to the entire completion of the four limbs of service and attainment in the combination of the preliminary practice and actual ground of the stage of perfection itself, one establishes the ground, the embodiment of the deity, which is the limb of service, by means of the preliminary practice of the four non-referentialities.[55] The actual practice consisting of withdrawal, absorption and breath-control, is the limb of further service itself. By means of the three seals,[56] there is the remembrance of desire, which is the limb of the attainment with respect to the unchanging bliss of great desire. Because meditative concentration actually brings about the attainment of the body of pristine cognition, this is the limb of great attainment.

With reference to the actual manner of attainment: withdrawal and absorption are the yogas whose essence is the indestructible reality of body, whereby the purification of the central channel achieves all aspects of the body of indestructible reality. Breath-control and restraint are the yogas of the indestructible reality of speech, whereby the control of vital energy causes the energies of the right and left channels to enter the central channel, and restraint stabilizes them, and so achieves all aspects of the indestructible reality of speech. Afterwards, remembrance is the yoga of the indestructible reality of mind, whereby, relying on the three seals, that enlightened mind that has melted is grasped by incorruptibility, and all aspects of the indestructible reality of mind are attained. Concentration is the indestructible reality of pristine cognition, whereby that very bliss is conjoined in indivisible embrace with the body of form, and all

aspects of the indestructible reality of pristine cognition, the coalescence of bliss and emptiness, are attained.

Moreover, it is said that withdrawal and absorption together constitute the limb of the attainment of the basis; breath-control and restraint together the limb of the attainment of vital energy; while recollection constitutes the limb of the attainment of reality.

Concerning them, Kālacakrapāda says in the *Aural Lineage* (*Snyan-brgyud*):

All should be known in terms of sixes …

Considering that to be the significance of his intention, previous masters have explained there to be six divisions of subject-matter in each case: the significance of the name of each [of the six main topics, withdrawal, etc.]; the temporal boundaries of meditation; the limb of meditative method; the signs and measures of meditation; the divisions of purificand and purifier; and the result obtained through meditation.

Those are further subsumed in the three virtues: withdrawal and absorption together are virtue in the beginning; breath-control and restraint together are virtue in the middle; and recollection and concentration together are virtue in the end. Vajragarbha has declared them to form such a path.

In general, it may be said that the Teacher's entire teaching is virtue in the beginning, middle and end. Nonetheless, with reference to this, the culmination of definitive significance, those others [among his teachings] are not superlative virtue, for they grasp conceptual meditation and the bliss of the action seal to be the absolute, and even their meditation on nonconceptual emptiness at the limit of investigation has the characteristic of being a cause of relative saṃsāra. They are not the absolute maṇḍala, and great bliss, and emptiness. In *this* path, however, because one at first attains the image of emptiness in the maṇḍala of the absolute, there is virtue in the beginning. Because, in the middle, the vital energies of action that are the cause of conceptions are brought to cessation, there is virtue in the middle. And, in the end, one attains the changelessness of the absolute seminal point. Owing to these three, and because there is the appearance of genuine pristine cognition in which non-conceptualization involving the abandonment of investigation [emerges] in the beginning, middle and end, this is virtue. For the significance of virtue is recognized to be happiness along with its causes.

Moreover, because it is virtuous in the beginning, one attains an uncommon concentration involving tranquility and insight. Because it is virtuous in the middle, at first vital energy and mind are intermingled and later the gates of the centers are opened. And because it is virtuous in the end, it brings about the achievement of the changeless body of pristine cognition.

Having applied oneself to yoga on the basis of those six limbs, initially there is a partial descent of the pristine cognition of indestructible reality. Gradually, having obtained the full blessing of the descent of indestructible reality, apparent signs arise with respect to visible experience. The mind abides in non-conceptualization automatically. Bodily experience occurs with spontaneous movement, and vocalic experience with various utterances. In these and other ways one guards the mastery of whatever happens, and so gradually undoes the knots of the three doors. In the end, the seminal fluids, points and energies of the six centers are purified, and one comes to achieve the body of the pristine cognition of the six families of conquerors.

8. Rdo-rje gsum-gyi bsnyen-sgrub, "the Service and Attainment of the Three Indestructible Realities"

It says in the *Guhyasamāja*:

Create your body to be like mind, mind like body, and mind like verbal articulation.

Thus, this is a distinctive instruction, according to which, in the phase of the ground, having established the relationship in which the three indestructible realities (*vajra*) are indivisible, one cultivates, during the phase of the path, the yoga of the indivisible indestructible reality, whereupon, in the phase of the result, the three secrets of indestructible reality are disclosed.[57] It says in the *Stanzas of Indestructible Reality* (Vajrapāda):

Purifying the channels, the taints of body are cleansed.
Purifying the winds, the taints of speech are cleansed.
Attaining incorruptibility, mind's propensities are overcome.
The centers' knots are undone
by the pulses of the four delights.
The sleep of ignorance is clarified
by recovering from unconsciousness.
In the decline of dispassion the mind exhausts hate.
Through passion pure, one is liberated in great bliss.

The significance of this is as follows: that which purifies the bodily channels is the limb of service, which pertains to the indestructible reality of body. With respect to this, the yoga for which body is the essential point is definitively established through the three categories of the causal phase, namely, withdrawal, its function, and its result, which is absorption.

That which purifies speech and vital energy is the limb of attainment, which pertains to the indestructible reality of speech. Having proceeded with the recitations of indestructible reality (*vajrajapa*), [the yoga for which speech is the essential point] is definitively established through four [categories,] namely, breath-control, its result, which is restraint, the function of those two, and the result that is thereby attained.

That which purifies mind, the seminal point, is the limb of great attainment, which pertains to the indestructible reality of mind. The mundane path is completely taught as recollection, including these three: for those of highest acumen, the inner heat; for those of middling acumen, [the yoga of] one's own body; and for those of least acumen, the reliance on another's body. The complete teaching of the supramundane path consists of the concentrations involving great bliss, [known] representationally and nonrepresentationally, whereupon, by abiding one-pointedly in that non-duality that is self-presenting bliss, all the essential seminal points that are outwardly projected are bound up without corruption. Thus, having experientially cultivated the yoga of the three indestructible realities in the appropriate manner, the fruit of the triple purification of the three obscurations[58] is the attainment in a single lifetime, in a single body, of the three resultant bodies.

* * *

Having thus condensed the path traditions of the lineages of attainment into the eight descents of transmitted precepts, I have referred to the foremost among the path traditions of the conveyances in Tibet, and to those in which the body of the path is most complete. Because the minor traditions are exceedingly many, their origins and the definitive ordering of their instructions, etc., cannot all be related here.[59]

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used to refer to works that are frequently mentioned:

BA George Roerich, trans., *The Blue Annals.* 2nd ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976.

DNgDz *Gdams ṅag mdzod: A Treasury of Instructions and Techniques for Spiritual Realization,* compiled by 'Jam-mgon Koṅ-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas. 12 vols. Delhi: N. Lungtok and N. Gyaltsan, 1971.

NSTB Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History.* Annotated translation by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein. 2 vols. London: Wisdom Publications, 1991.

ShK Kong-sprul Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho [=Blo-gros-mtha'-yas], *Shes-bya kun-khyab.*. 3 vols. Beijing: Mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 1982.

Notes

1. E. Gene Smith, "Introduction" to *Kongtrul's Encyclopaedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture.* Śatapiṭaka Series 80. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1970.
2. Consider, for example, Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies.* Washington/London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.
3. These are: (1) *Bka'-brgyud sngags-mdzod,* 8 vols. Paro: Dilgo Khyentsey Rinpoche, 1982. An earlier edition of the same collection, was published by the Gsung rab nyams gso rgyun 'phel par khang in 6 vols., 1974. (2) *Rgya-chen bka'-mdzod* 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas. 20 vols. Paro: Ngodup, 1975. The last four volumes (17-20) constitute (3) the *Shes-bya kun-khyab mdzod,* which, however, does not properly belong here. (3) *ShK.* (4) *DNgDz.* (5) *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo.* Paro: Ngodrup and Sherap Drimay, 1976.
   For considerable information on Kong-sprul's writing, the reader is referred to Dieter Schuh, *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke: Gesammelte Werken des Koṅ-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas.* Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, XI, VI. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976.
4. "gDams-ngag: Tibetan Technologies of the Self," in Roger Jackson and José Cabezón, eds., *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1995).
5. The introductory passage that follows is drawn from *DNgDz,* vol. 12, pp. 645-646. The summaries of the eight conveyances that follow are given on pp. 662-83.
6. This refers to the *Maṇi Bka'-'bum* traditions associated with king Srong-btsan-sgam-po, on which see, M. Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), ch. 8.
7. Srong-btsan sgam-po, the emanation of Avalokiteśvara; Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, the emanation of Mañjuśrī; and Khri Ral-pa-can, the emanation of Vajrapāṇi.
8. The vehicles of (1) *śrāvakas,* (2) *pratyekabuddhas,* (3) *bodhisattvas,* which are the three "causal vehicles" *(rgyu'i theg-pa)*; (4) *kriyātantra,* (5) *caryātantra,* (6) *yogatantra,* which are the three outer vehicles among the "fruitional vehicles" of mantra *('bras-bu'i theg-pa sngags phyi-pa)*; (7) *mahāyoga,* (8) *anuyoga,* and (9) *atiyoga,* which are the inner mantras *(sngags nang-pa). Atiyoga* is also called *Rdzogs-chen,* the Great Perfection. For detailed discussions of the nine vehicle system of the Rnying-ma tradition, see Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje. *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History.* Trans. Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1991, vol. 1, book 1, parts 3 and 4. The survey of the Great Perfection that is given there, pp. 294-345, will clarify the many terse allusions found in the present synopsis.
9. As in other Mahāyāna traditions, these are the Body of Reality *(dharmakāya),* Body of Perfect Rapture *(saṃbhogakāya),* and Body of Emanation *(nirmāṇakāya).* For their special interpretation within Rnying-ma-pa doctrine, see Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism,* vol. 1, book 1, part 2.
10. The "six vehicles of definitive attainment" are the *bodhisattvayāna* and the first five of the mantra vehicles.
11. The consciousnesses associated with the five physical senses, plus mental consciousness *(manovijñāna)* afflicted mental activity *(kliṣṭamanaḥ),* and the ground consciousness *(ālayavijñāna).*
12. Primordial liberation *(ye-grol),* natural liberation *(rang-grol),* direct liberation *(gcer-grol),* and unlimited liberation *(mtha'-grol).* Cf. *ShK,* vol. 3, p. 292.
13. The last, degenerate period during which the dharma is still taught, and during which human beings are subject to the five defilements *(pañcakaṣāya),* or dregs *(snyings-ma),* of short lifespan, wrong views, afflictions, the general degeneration of sentient beings, and bad times.
14. Among the three baskets *(tripiṭaka),* the Vinayapiṭaka corresponds to the higher training in behavior *(adhhisīla),* the Sūtrapiṭaka to the higher training in meditation *(adhicitta),* and the Abhidharmapiṭaka to the higher training in discernment *(adhiprajñā).*
15. The maṇḍala of the Sixteen Seminal Points, as depicted in a painting of about 1900, is reproduced in Gerd-Wolfgang Essen and Tsering Tashi Thingo, *Die Götter des Himalaya: Buddhistische Kunst Tibets, die Sammlung Gerd-Wolfgang Essen* (Munich: Prestel) vol. 1, pp. 182-3.
16. For the text of this work, see Helmut Eimer, *Bodhipathapradīpa,* Asiatische Forschungen 59 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979); and for an English translation, Atiśa, *A Lamp for the Path and Commentary,* trans. Richard Sherburne, S. J. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983).
17. *Bodhipathapradīpa,* verse 2ab.
18. *Ratnāvalī,* ch. 1, verse 3. The higher stations *(abhyudaya)* are the fortunate stations of birth in saṃsāra, which are still far from the definitive attainment *(naiḥśreyasa)* of liberation, nirvāṇa.

19. The *Discus of Weapons* (*Mtshon-cha'i 'khor-lo*) and *Poison-conquering Peacock* (*Rma-bya dug-'joms*) by Dharmarakṣita; the *Vajra-song Conquering the Apprehension of Self* (*Bdag-'dzin 'joms-pa rdo-rje'i glu*) by Mitrayogin; and *Pounding Down Conceptions* (*Rtog-pa 'bur-'joms*) and *Eighteen Doctrines Carried onto the Path* (*Lam-khyer-gyi chos bco-brgyad*) of Suvarṇadvīpa.
20. It should be clear from passages such as this that the "relative" cultivation (*kun-rdzob sems-bskyed*) is not superseded by the "absolute" cultivation of bodhicitta (*don-dam sems-bskyed*). The designations "relative" and "absolute" refer, rather, to their respective orientations to appearance and emptiness, which here, as always in the Madhyamaka traditions, are thought to be inseparably coordinated.
21. *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 308, lists these as scriptural authority (*lung*), historical precedent (*lo-rgyus*), esoteric precepts (*man-ngag*), and spiritual experience (*nyams-myong*). "Epistemic authority" (*tshad-ma*) therefore is used here in a rather different sense from that familiar from the pramāṇa traditions. Nevertheless, it is still clearly related to the concept of authoritative sources of knowledge, but here within the specific context of a tradition of practice.
22. The text here erroneously reads *gsum* "three."
23. *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 310. These are: the unsubsiding river of empowerment; the undeclining lineage of blessing; the irreversible stream of instruction; and the fulfillment of aspirations through devotion.
24. I.e. Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po (1092-1158).
25. *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 318-21. The "four views" (*lta-ba bzhi*) are those corresponding to the sequence of the four empowerments; the three essences (*ngo-bo-nyid gsum*) refer to appearance, emptiness and their coalescence; and the four limits of achievement (*grub-mtha' bzhi*) are the culminating results attained through the sequences of meditation appropriate to each of the four empowerments. The five bodies are the four referred to in n. 30, with the addition of the Body of Great Bliss (*mahāsukhakāya*).
26. *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 310-11. The five causal coincidences demarcate the boundaries of the five paths of accumulation, application, seeing, meditation and no-more-learning.
27. The three occasions for the gathering of the elements (*khams-'du lugs bzhi*) pertain to those who are temperamentally inclined to the practice (*las-'phro-can*), those who are devoted (*mos-gus-can*) and those who are energetic (*brtson-'grus-can*). These and the seven beneficial precepts are detailed in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 312-6.
28. Refer to *Shk*, vol. 3, p. 621, for surveys of these.
29. The text here erroneously reads *gzhi* instead of *lus*. Cf. *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 322-3.
30. The ten signs (*rtags bcu*) are ten types of experience whose occurrence associated with the mastery of the yoga of luminosity; the eight attributes (*yon-tan brgyad*) result from the purification of the elements by means of the yogas of the channels and vital energies (*ShK*, vol., 3, pp. 345 and 658); and the four enlightened activities (*phrin-las bzhi*) are those developing from ritual activity: peaceful (*zhi-ba*), enriching (*rgyas-pa*), coercive (*dbang*), and wrathful (*drag-po*). Of the supreme accomplishments (*mchog-gi dngos-grub*), the seven limbs (*yan-lag bdun*, *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 658), that pertain to the *sambhogakāya*, are : (1) possession of the major and minor marks of the Buddha; (2) the consort's embrace; (3) great bliss; (4) insubstantiality; (5) perpetual compassion for all beings; (6) cessationlessness; and (7) unimpededness. The eight lordships (*dbang-phyug brgyad*, *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 639 and 660) are the heightened achievement of the common accomplishments of bodily subtleness, lightness, greatness, ubiquity, clairvoyance, firm power over those qualities, overcoming all beings, and ability to adive as one will. The four bodies are the three common to Mahāyāna teaching in general, with the addition of the Body of Essential Nature (*svābhāvikakāya*), and the five pristine cognitions (*ye-shes lnga*) are the *pañcajñāna* mentioned throughout Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna literature.
31. Because much has been written about the Six Doctrines of Nāropa elsewhere, there is no need to add extensively to Kong-sprul's terse remarks here. See especially: Herbert V. Guenther, *The Life and Teaching of Nāropa* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1963); Chang Chen Chi, *Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1982). The six basic doctrines – inner heat (*gtum-mo*), apparitional body (*sgyu-lus*), dream (*rmi-lam*), luminosity (*'od-gsal*), the intermediate state (between death and rebirth, *bar-do*), and transference (of consciousness at death, *'pho-ba*) – are in any case common with the six doctrines of the Shangs-pa tradition, discussed below. Action seal (*las-rgya, karmamudrā*) is the discipline whereby great bliss (*bde-ba chen-po, mahāsukha*) is achieved by yoga practiced in union with a suitable consort. The "penetration of the city" (*grong-'jug*) appears to be a lost teaching, but is reported to have involved the ability to appropriate other bodies to one's own consciousness is shown to be continuous despite bodily discontinuity. Cf. *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 370.
32. These alternative classifications are more fully explained in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 325-8.
33. The text erroneously reads "seven distinctions," but should be emended following *ShK*, vol 3, p. 381, where the three distinctions are explained to be: the essence that is transcendental perfection (*ngo-bo pha-rol-tu phyin-pa*);

accordance with mantra (*sngags dang rjes-su mthun-pa*); and the name "Mahāmudrā" (*ming phyag-rgya chen-po*). On Maitrīpa, see Mark Tatz, "The Life of the Siddha-Philosopher Maitrīgupta," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107/4(1987): pp. 695-711.

34. These, of course, are not to be confused with the six doctrines – inner heat, etc. – already discussed above.
35. The preliminary practices, as redacted within the Karma Bka'-brgyud tradition, are given a detailed exposition in Jamgön Kongtrül, *The Torch of Certainty*, trans. Judith Hanson (Boulder/London: Shambhala, 1977).
36. These are detailed in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 383-4.
37. Until seven generations of teachers had passed, beginning with Khyung-po's "grand-teacher," the Buddha Vajradhara, his teaching was "sealed" so that it could only be transmitted in full to a single chosen disciple. This "seal" was appropriately broken by the seventh successor, Sangs-rgyas Ston-pa (1219-1290).
38. Mahāmudrā in Sanskrit, so-called because, as a seal closes a letter or completes a document, this teaching establishes the limit of all phenomena in the nature of the enlightened mind.
39. In the highest teachings of the tantras, the empowerment required to qualify the disciple is divided into four major stages, corresponding to the stages of the practice of yoga.
40. The four mundane states are waking consciousness, dreamless sleep, dream and absorption in trance.
41. The three in this case are: the time of death itself, the period immediately after death, when one enters into trance-like oblivion; and the period following that, when disembodied consciousness grows active once more, and is subject to intensive hallucinations as it searches for its next place of birth.
42. *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 400: "The four faults are these: (i) though your mind is neither united with, nor separate from, the Body of Reality, you don't recognize it, because it's too close; (ii) though [the realization of it] may occur to you, you don't comprehend it, because it's too profound; (iii) though it suffices just to recall it, you can't believe it, because it's too easy; and (iv) though the Three Bodies might arise within you, you can't accept it, because it's too good."
43. *Myur-mdzad ye-shes-kyi mgon-po*, also known as the "Six-armed Mahākāla" (*nag-po chen-po phyag-drug-pa*), a protective deity whose cult spread from the Shangs-pa into most of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, especially the Jo-nang-pa and the Dge-lugs-pa.
44. The vows of the *prātimokṣa*, of the *bodhisattva*, and of the mantras.
45. The three essential points (*gnad gsum*), which concern body, breathing and mind, and the ten bonds (*chings bcu*) are detailed in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 412-3.
46. Dam-pa Kun-dga' of Ding-ri (1062-1124). For his hagiography, see *BA*, pp. 920-23.
47. On the four seals (*phyag-rgya bzhi*) in general, see David L. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors* (Boston: Shambhala, 1987), pp. 265-9.
48. Perhaps to be identified with the four *dhyāna* (Pali, *jhāna*) of normative Buddhist doctrine, as given in, e. g., *Dīghanikāya*, II. 186, III. 222 (PTS edition).
49. In Tibetan *spyod*, "conduct," and *gcod*, "cutting," are homonyms, both pronounced approximately *chö*.
50. *gnyan-khrod*. Sites for the disposal of corpses and other locations associated with hostile spirits.
51. These terms refer to specific visualizations practiced by adepts of the Object of Cutting.
52. Also mentioned in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 427-8, but not precisely enumerated, except for the "confidence with respect to the view" (*lta-ba'i gding*). As the same passage speaks also of "view and conduct" (*lta-spyod*), we may surmise that the three are view, meditation and conduct.
53. The technical terms found here are explained in detail in *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 432-453: withdrawal (*sor-sdud*) refers to the withdrawal of consciousness from outer objects; absorption (*bsam-gtan*) is the achievement of the mastery of luminosity; breath-control (*srog-rtsol*) involves the purification of the energy channels, and the concentration of vital energy in the central channel; restraint (*'dzin-pa*) is the concentration of the vital energies in the indestructible seminal point (*mi-shigs-pa'i thig-le*); remembrance (*rjes-dran*) involves the realization of bliss and emptiness through the mastery of the three seals: action seal (*las-rgya*), seal of pristine cognition (*ye-rgya*) and great seal (*phyag-rgya chen-mo*, which here is the "image of emptiness," *stong-gzugs*); and concentration (*ting-'dzin*) involves the coalescence of the "image of emptiness" and unchanging bliss.
54. The four limbs of the deity's service (*sevā*), further (*upasevā*), attainment (*sādhana*) and great attainment (*mahāsādhana*) are best known in connection with the stage of creation. Here, they have been adapted to describe primarily the stage of perfection.
55. *ltos-med bzhi*. Refer to *ShK*, vol. 3, pp. 431-2. One engaged in the service of the deity becomes from mundane entanglement, avoiding reference to the enjoyments of body, speech, mind and sexual pleasure.
56. *ShK*, vol. 3, p. 445, specifies that these are the *karmamudrā*, *jñānamudrā*, and *mahāmudrā*.

57. The three indestructible realities are body, speech and mind; and, similarly, the three secrets are the body, speech and mind of a buddha.
58. The obscurations of afflictions, ignorance, and absorption in trance.
59. *ShK,* vol. 3, pp. 461-464, on the minor traditions, discusses primarily the teaching of Śāntigupta as redacted by Tāranātha., *DNgDz,* vol. 12, includes these and others, including representative teachings of the major Avalokiteśvara traditions.

A MOST PLEASING SYMPHONY
AN UNKNOWN BIOGRAPHY OF THE FIFTH DALAI LAMA

Samten G. Karmay

It is rare in Tibetan literature to have both an "autobiography" (*rang rnam*) and a "biography" (*rnam thar*) written by someone other than the author of the autobiography. This is the case of the *Dukula*, the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama (hereafter DL), Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682),[1] and his biography written by sMon-'gro-pa 'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal rdo-rje.

As I have taken up the study of the *Dukula*, Gene Smith very kindly thought, as always, that it would be useful to me if he sent me a copy of a manuscript of the biography which he recently came upon. Although this work of sMon-'gro-pa was known to exist it has never been published and so had remained inaccessible. I shall call this work simply "the biography". It only reaches up to the year 1646 when DL was thirty. I do not intend to study the whole of it in this article. There is only a limited amount of strictly biographical material compared with the *Dukula*. Two thirds of the work are in fact filled with quotations from Sutras, Tantras and other Buddhist classical works. These quotations are meant to demonstrate the concordance of Bodhisattva activity as revealed in Buddhist scriptures, but from a historical point of view, they remain largely irrelevant to the subject. Added to this is its flowery language embellished with poems of the *shastra* type of writing. Nevertheless, it not only sheds light on some obscure passages in the *Dukula*, but there are also a number of points on which it differs from what DL states in the *Dukula*. It is upon some of these aspects that I would like to dwell in the following pages.

The author of the biography

Almost nothing is known about sMon-'gro-pa 'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal rdo-rje. Yet he was certainly a remarkably learned man of the seventeenth century. He was the son of the scholar sMon-'gro-pa Rig-gnas rgya-mtsho'i 'phreng-ba 'dzin-pa *alias* Tshe-dbang don-'grub who was a cousin of the Jo-nang-pa master Kun-dga' grol-mchog and an official at the court of bSam-'grub-rtse.[2] He was involved in his family's contest over the authority of the Jo-nang-pa monastic establishments not long after the recognition of Taranatha (1575-1635) as the reincarnation of Kun-dga' grol-mchog at Chos-lung byang-rtse.[3]

sMon-'gro is a place in the La-stod region in gTsang. DL reports that Tshe-dbang don-'grub came to meet him in Shigatse in 1642 when DL was received there in state by the victorious Gushri Khan (1582-1654).[4]

DL states he was overwhelmed by the learned man and wished to study under him, but given the political circumstances at the time it was not possible for him to remain in Shigatse.[5] In 1643 an invitation was sent asking him to come and give tutorial assistance to the young DL, but the scholar replied that he would send his son sMon-'gro-pa 'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal rdo-rje instead.[6] The reason for not coming himself is not given. It was probably his age. Nevertheless, in 1644 'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal arrived in Lhasa. DL states that he made a thorough revision with him of the Sanskrit grammar based on the *Kalapa* and *Candrapa* which he had studied earlier. DL also learned from him the *dkar rtsis* astronomy, *Kavyadarsha*, as well as asking the master about difficult points in the *Bodhisattvavadana-kalpalata*.[7]

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1. For an account of DL's visionary experiences, one may see Samten G. Karmay, *Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Gold Manuscript of the Fournier Collection*. London: Serindia 1988 (Reprint 1998).
2. *KGZ* f. 67a: *sde ba smon 'gro ba mkhas pa tshe dbang don 'grub*.
3. *MLh* pp. 149, 151, 403.
4. *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 216.
5. *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 216.
6. *Dukula*, Vol. I, pp. 244, 258.
7. *The Tibetan Tripitaka*, Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation (Reproduction of the Peking edition), 1964-1966, Vol. 288, No. 5655.

'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal was therefore someone who personally knew DL. In the colophon of the biography he describes himself as *rig byed pa*, i.e. one who is versed in Vedas (*rig byed*). Indeed his style of writing certainly confirms this. The colophon further indicates that it was dKon-mchog chos-'phel (d.1646), the thirty-fifth throne-holder of dGa'-ldan monastery at the time, often known as Gling-smad zhabs-drung in the *Dukula*, who requested him to write the biography. dKon-mchog chos-'phel was supported in his request by the young Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705) who was known as Zhal-ngo Grong-smad, "Leader from Grong-smad", during this period.

Although dKon-mchog chos-'phel was one of the architects of the dGe-lugs-pa's ascendancy during the seventeenth century, he remains an obscure figure. According to the biography, a *rnam thar* of dKon-mchog chos-'phel entitled *mKhas pa'i rna rgyan* was written by rDzing-phyi mkhan-po (p. 118a). dKon-mchog chos-'phel was also the chief lama of the small monastic establishment known as gSang-sngags-mkhar which was a dGe-lugs-pa centre situated on the way to dGa'-ldan monastery, but during the conflict between the Karma bka'-brgyud in gTsang and the dGe-lugs in dBus, the former had seized it. Later, dKon-mchog chos-'phel managed to retrieve it for the dGe-lugs-pa cause. He was involved from the beginning in selecting the *sprul sku* candidates of the Fourth Dalai Lama and later became the chief tutor of DL. It was his idea to build the Potala Palace on what was known as the Red Hill (dMar-po-ri, also written sMel-po-ri). It is interesting to note that in 1644 he, amongst other people, also urged DL to write the *Dukula* giving him a copy of the biography of Po-dong 'Jigs-bral phyogs-las rnam-rgyal (1376-1451) by 'Jigs-med-'bangs, a disciple of Po-dong.[8] dKon-mchog chos-'phel advised DL to use the biography of Po-dong as a model since it was a well written work. However, DL, who aged only twenty-seven then, was not convinced of the need to write an autobiography and politely declined saying that he was too busy at the time writing a work on the *Phar phyin* literature.[9] Nevertheless, in 1667 DL aged fifty came back to the question, and began to think that he, after all, might as well write an autobiography, but he ignored the suggestion of taking Bo-dong's biography as a model for the account of his own life. He considered Bo-dong's biography to be too full of praises to the lama.

DL further remarks that "some biographies were written in too poetic a language and others were too full of ordinary vocabulary like the old herdsman's local dialect. It is rare to have one which is honest looking and straight forward in the meaning."[10] When DL made these remarks he might well have had in mind of the genre of his own biography by sMon-'gro-pa as we shall see.

The first section of the biography

'Jam-dbyangs dbang-rgyal completed the biography in 1646 at an unspecified place situated in the district of gZhad, gTsang. It is entitled *rGyal dbang thams cad mkhyen pa'i rtogs brjod mthong ba ldan mchog tu dga' ba'i sgra dbyangs sarga gsum pa*, "The life-story of the Conqueror, All Knowing, meaningful to the beholder and a most pleasing symphony that has three cantos". The biography was presented to DL who records it in the section of the year fire-dog (1647) of the *Dukula* simply stating, "I responded to sMon-'gro pan-chen 'Jam-dbang dbang-rgyal rdo-rje who wrote me a letter and sent the volume of the life-story of me which he composed at the order of Gling-smad zhabs-drung".[11] DL made no comment either on the style of the language or contents of the biography, but he does mention it among the works which served as the sources for his *Dukula* which he began to write in 1667.[12]

As the title shows, the biography is divided into three contrasting sections. The author uses the Sanskrit term *sarga*, "section", "canto", the use of which was *à la mode* in the seventeenth century. In the first section

8. This is published under the title: *Bo dong paṇ chen gyi rnam thar* (*dPal ldan bla ma dam pa thams cad mkhyen pa phyogs thams cad las rnam par rgyal ba'i zhabs kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar gyi dga' ston*), *Gangs can rig mdzod*, 15, Lhasa, Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1991.

9. *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 13.

10. *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 17.

11. *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 279.

12. *Dukula*, Vol. I. pp. 14-15.

(1a-8b2), which is in the form of an introduction, the author takes up the topic of Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation (*sprul sku*) in general and then devotes himself to the discussion of the life-series of Lokeshvara.

The second section of the biography

The second section (8b-20a6) is devoted to brief accounts of the series of the Dalai Lamas. It starts from rGyal-ba dGe-'dun-grub (1391-1475) and ends after giving a brief account of the Fourth Dalai Lama (1589-1616). The author asserts that "it was Lokeshvara who came in a series of Dalai Lamas in the way a snake changes its skin".[13] The coming of the series of the Dalai Lamas is supported in his opinion by various prophecies. In this connection the author cites a prophetical tradition whose origin he does not specify. The prophecy is based on a description of a juniper tree in Rwa-sgreng that had, it is stated, seven layers of bark (*shun pa rim pa bdun*, 19a) believed to indicate that there would be seven "spiritual guides" (*rnam 'dren bdun*), that is to say seven Dalai Lamas. He goes on to say that Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, the Fifth Dalai Lama, was the fifth of the seven.[14] The prophecy is not mentioned in the *Dukula*. However, the author of the biography was not the first who brought out this idea. It is echoed in a song composed by the Second Dalai Lama. I have not been able to locate the song. It is, however, quoted in the biographies of the Sixth and Seventh Dalai Lamas.[15] According to sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, DL himself also received a similar prophecy and that this is found in the *Yang gsang rgya can*.[16] The work to which the sDe-srid refers to is in all probability the *gSang ba'i rnam thar rgya can*,[17] but I have not been able to trace the prophecy in it.

In the biography of the Seventh Dalai Lama, lCang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje, who completed it in 1758, takes up the topic again stating that the seventh Dalai Lama was the one indicated as the seventh guide by the prophecy, but he carefully avoids saying that there would be no one after the Seventh Dalai Lama.[18]

The Prophecy

The prophecy is found in what is known as *bKa' gdams bu chos*.[19] It is in the section devoted to the life-series of a prince called dKon-mchog-'bangs. The prince is presented as a previous birth of 'Brom-ston rGyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas (1008-1064), the chief disciple of Atisha in Tibet. 'Brom founded Rwa-sgreng monastery in 1056. In the prophecy, it is said that in Rwa-sgreng there would be 21,000 juniper trees all connected through their roots to two trunks of juniper trees, symbolizing Atisha and 'Brom. Amongst other characteristics, these trunks have seven layers of bark suggesting that there would be seven guides in Tibet. The junipers of Rwa-sgreng, Rwa-sgreng shug-pa as they are known, are to this day considered as sacred. Their twigs or even the pounded powder of their branches are sold in the markets in Lhasa although few seem to know why the junipers from Rwa-sgreng are so sacred.

In general the junipers from the ancient times were considered as sacred in the Bonpo rituals, being the eternal symbol of the Bon religion, and believed to have the effect of purification and so used in the purificatory rituals. The *bKa' gdams bu chos* uses the same term *lha shing*, "tree of the gods", to describe the tree as in the Bonpo literature.[20]

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13. *shun lpags rjes (brjes) kyang sbrul ma rjes (brjes) pa'i tshul du byon pa ...* (f. 15b).
14. F. 20b.
15. *RSNy* p. 47; *dPag bsam rin po che'i snye ma*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13.
16. *BS* p. 376: *'gro don skyong ba'i skye ba ni/ bdun 'byung khyed nyid lnga pa ste/*
17. *A Record of the Visionary Experiences of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho*, Smanrtis Shesrig Spendzod, Vol. 42, Leh 1972.
18. *PNy* Vol. I, pp. 12-13.
19. *'Brom ston rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas kyi skyes rabs bka' gdams bu chos*, Ziling: mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1993, pp. 193-96.
20. Cf. Samten G.Karmay, "The Local Deities and the Juniper Tree: a Ritual for Purification (*bsang*)", in *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point 1998, No. 21 (pp. 413-22).

The third section of the biography

This section is the longest (20b1-128a5). It deals with the life of DL, but compared to the *Dukula* its treatment of the subject is surprisingly superficial. It is not because the author did not have much information of DL's life at the time, but presumably it was too sensitive to go into any detail given the political clout that DL had acquired just at the time when the author was requested or rather "ordered", in DL's own word, to write it.

At the beginning of the section, the author still continues with the theme of various prophecies quoting a certain number of tantric works that do not seem to bear any real relevance to the subject. The family Zahor, in which DL was born, and its lineage are related to the story of Pehar. Here the author refers the reader to an unknown historical work, a *rgyal rab (rabs)* written by 'Phyong-rgyas paṇ-chen. The author neither gives the full title of the work nor has identified 'Phyong-rgyas paṇ-chen (27a6).

He goes on to state that the birth of DL was prophesied by the religious protector of bSam-yas monastery, that is Pehar. He also mentions that Taranatha (1575-1635)[21] had encouraged DL's mother to consent to her marriage into the Zahor family foretelling that a prince would be born, and later when in 1617 she gave birth to a child, he was asked to give him a name. In the same year the rNying-ma-pa master Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi dbang-po (1580-1639), who was a distant cousin of the family, performed a certain number of rituals for the benefit of the child (32b2).

Due to the political and military conflict at the time, the mother and child had to flee their fort and eventually had to return to her own home at sNa-dkar-rtse. These events are dealt with in a rather cryptic manner without ever mentioning what happened to the father of the child who was in fact arrested and imprisoned at the bSam-'grub-rtse court where he later died in 1626. He states that the child, when he was five at sNa-dkar-rtse, left a wonderful footprint on a rock, but later partisan people said that it was the footprint of O-rgyan mtsho-mo (35b2). However, neither the author of the biography nor DL reveal the identity of O-rgyan mtsho-mo. She was the 6th rDo-rje phag-mo of bSam-sdings.[22]

Another event which emerges more clearly in this biography than in the *Dukula* involves the relation between Taranatha and DL. When the officials of Drepung went to ask the king in gTsang for permission to recognize the child of the Zahor family as the *sprul sku* of the Fourth Dalai Lama and the king agreed, Taranatha is supposed to have made the following remark in the presence of the king and his ministers: "The outbreak of fire cannot be extinguished by fire, the spurt of water cannot be stopped by water. Little is done in order to prevent the coming of this prince of 'Phyong-rgyas".[23] It is to be recalled that Taranatha, the great historian, had entertained hope when he encouraged the mother of the child to consent to her marriage, to the effect that a prince would be born to her, and when the boy was born he was asked to give a name which was Mi-'gyur kun-dga', a name that has the echo of the Jo-nang-pa, the Buddhist order to which he belonged. When the child was formally recognized as the *sprul sku* of the Fourth Dalai Lama, he must have been alarmed and disappointed at the way in which he allegedly made such a statement. In the opinion of the author of the biography, if the king consented to the request, it was because of the pressure from the Mongols and not because he really wished to make it up with dGe-lugs-pa.

21. The date of the death of the historian is given by Ngag-dbang blo-gros grags-pa (1920-1975) in his *dPal ldan jo nang pa'i chos 'byung rgyal ba'i chos tshul gsal byed zla ba'i sgron me* (*Jo nang chos 'byung zla ba'i sgron me*, Krung ko'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1992, p. 59), but the author does not indicate on what sources the date is based.

22. Her full name is O-rgyan mkha'-spyod ye-shes mtsho-mo. According to Tashi Tsering (*bsam sding rdo rje phag mo sku phreng rim byon gyi mtshan dang 'khrungs gshegs kyi lo khams star chags su 'god thabs sngon 'gro'i zhib 'jug mdor bsdus*, in *gYu mtsho*, *Bod kyi bud med pa'i dus deb*, Dharamsala, No. 1, 1993, 39) she was born in 1543. Lobzang Gyamtsho saw her in 1620 (*Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 50), hence when she was 77, if the above date of her birth is correct.

23. *me 'bur mes mi non/ chu 'bur chus mi non zer ba yin pas/ 'phyong rgyas kyi rgyal bu 'di 'byon pa la bkag cha byas zhan 'dra* (36a5). Cf. also *Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 54. This passage does not seem to be found in *MLh*.

Concerning the test whether the child was the genuine *sprul sku* or not, the author is categorical in stating that:

> When bKa'-chen and others arranged in public a certain number of articles, such as samta, vajra, bell and porcelain bowls which belonged to the previous Dalai Lama mixing them with identical ones belonging to other persons in front of the child, he unhesitatingly picked up all the things correctly and everybody looking on was amazed.[24]

Now let us see what DL himself has to say about this test:

> The official Tsha-ba bKa'-bcu of dGa'-ldan Palace showed me statues and rosaries (that belonged to the Fourth Dalai Lama and other people), but I was unable to distinguish between them! When he left the room I heard him tell the people outside that I had successfully passed the tests. Later, when he became my tutor, he would often admonish me and say: "You must work hard, since you were unable to recognize the objects!"[25]

After arriving in Drepung in 1622 at the age of six, the author states DL did not accept an invitation from the two Mongol officials who asked him to go to Kokonor (mTsho-kha) and instead DL went to Ri-sgo in E, southern Tibet (39b).

Here the *Dukula* is more explicit. DL was only six years old when the invitation was made and he was in fact escorted away secretly in order to avoid the invitation. It shows clearly the existence of tension between the dGe-lugs-pa and their Mongol ally.[26]

In 1624, in the early morning of New Year's day, DL for the first time propitiated the goddess dPal-ldan lha-mo on the roof of the dGa'-ldan Palace in Drepung when the sun rose and projected its rays on to the building. According to the author, this propitiation is practiced in accordance with a Tantra entitled *dPal ldan dmag zor rgyal mo'i rgyud.* This Tantra is said to contain the myth according to which the goddess moves with the sun's rays in the early morning (41b-42a). Unlike the biography, the *Dukula* does not give the name of the Tantra in question and so it remains unidentified. At any rate, the ritual tradition is still continued by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama in Dharamsala where early in the morning of the New Years's day the ritual is performed.

Concerning bSod-nams rab-brtan (1595-1657), the *phyag mdzod*, "Treasurer", of DL who later rose to the position of Regent, the author seems to be eager to flatter him by saying that he was, in a previous life, the famous minister mGar sTong-btsan of King Srong-btsan sgam-po. This is, to my knowledge, the only source where such a fatuous claim is ever made (50b-51a). It is of course connected with the Buddhist belief that Avalokiteshvara manifested himself in the form of the king and the latter that of DL, hence the Treasurer as the minister mGar.

In 1632-1633, a number of Mongol interventions began in Tibet. They were mainly involved in the clash of religious interests between the Karma bka' brgyud and dGe-lugs, particularly since the Fourth Dalai Lama, who was of Mongol origin, was installed in Drepung. However, the Mongol pillage, on the excuse of protecting one religious school against another, was so heinous that the author describes the situation by quoting a Tibetan proverb: "They plundered about like a lion without a bridle under a sky without pillars".[27] This is followed by a somewhat rough account of the Mongol interference in Tibet during the years of 1632-

24. *bka' chen sogs kyis rje gong ma'i phyag tam rdor dril zhal dkar sogs dam pa de nyid kyis nye bar spyad bya rnams dang/ skye bo gzhan gyi yo byad de 'dra ba dag thun mongs su sku gzhogs su gshibs te gzigs sngar phab pas nged kyi 'di dang 'di'o zhes 'chug med du rang gir mdzad pa sogs ngos 'dzin rnams gsal bar gnang bas der 'khod pa'i mi rnams kyi yid la sngon med pa'i ngo mtshar gyi rtsed dga' bskrun zhing/* (f. 36b2).

25. *dka'* (*bka'*) *bcu bas sku 'dra dang phyag 'phreng sogs bstan byung ba ngos zin pa'i tha snyad ni ma byung sgo thon nas ngos 'dzin shin tu yid ches par byung zhes smra zhing sting* (*rting*) *ma slob gnyer byed skabs kyang hur thag ma byas na de skabs ngos 'dzin ni ma byung zhes.../* (*Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 55).

26. *Dukula*, Vol. I, pp. 60-61.

27. *gnam ka med kyi 'og tu seng ge srab med du 'phyo ba lta bu* ... .(f. 75 'og, b4).

1633. Nevertheless, it shows that the author had a good understanding of the various Mongol factions whose divisions and origins are not always very clear in the *Dukula.*

One of the houses in Lhasa where DL often stayed was called dGa'-ldan khang-gsar. In the biography it is stated that the Treasurer bSod-nams rab-brtan had the house thoroughly renovated in 1647, *me phag* (80b). Here the date is wrong. It was in fact in 1634, *shing phag*. The renovation of the house was presumably done for DL as his residence in the town although the author does not state whom it originally belonged to. It was in this house that the Treasurer died in 1657.

More Mongol factious fights, which first broke out in Kokonor in 1637, and the war between the Beri king and the army of Gushri Khan in Kham in 1641 are recounted in some detail, especially the deeds of the Mongol Khan and his dreams. These conflicts eventually led to the civil war between the province of gTsang and that of dBus in Central Tibet in 1641. The war was led by Gushri Khan with his Mongol army on the side of the Dbus province, bastion of the new Buddhist school, the dGe-lugs-pa, against the king of gTsang, Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po, and his people who were mainly followers of the Karma bka'-brgyud school (81b-92b). The accounts of the circumstances which led to the war agree roughly with those of the *Dukula*. However, what is not recounted either in the biography or in the *Dukula* is the history of the total destruction of the great monastery which the young sovereign Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po spent years in building. The biography mentions it in a most ambiguous statement as follows:

> His (the king) monasteries were simply sealed off into the sphere of that which cannot be conceived.[28]

The *Dukula* is as ambiguous, but in a way more frank on the subject. It states:

> In the great religious establishment, supports of body, speech and mind (i.e. statues, books and stupas), were made; centres for the studies of Sutras, Tantras, medicine, Sanskrit and poetry were built showing great strength of meritorious work. (The destruction of this religious establishment) had in fact become the action of demons as described in the *brGyad stong pa*,[29] because if we examine the activities of the king it appears to me that he was a religious king. However, it was not appropriate for me to meet him (in Shigatse) since I had had performed many violent rituals against him and I could not move about (at Shigatse when I was there in 1642).[30]

Neither the biography nor the *Dukula* mention the name of the monastery. Moreover, the biography puts its statement in the plural (*dgon sde rnams*) which further lessens the importance of what seems to have in fact been a crucial question which he, the author, perhaps thought too embarrassing for the dGe-lugs-pa authorities to be clearly stated. What is certain is that both sources refer to the same famous monastery normally known as bKra-shis zil-gnon, "The one which overpowers bKra-shis (lhun-po)" in dGe-lugs-pa sources. It is said to have been built and is situated between the Tashilhunpo monastery and the fort of bSam-'grub-rtse. The same sources usually maintain that the monastery was founded in order to contest the authority of Tashilhunpo,[31] but who founded it and how it was finally destroyed were never clearly recorded in the sources that I have so far seen. However, the compilers of the *Sa skya'i gdung rabs* have fortunately taken a special interest in recording the events since a member of the Sa-skya family was involved in founding the monastery. He was Kun-dga' bsod-nams lhun-grub (1571-1642). He studied at Ngor and later became the abbot of the rTse-gdong establishment, hence he was known as rTse-gdong zhabs-drung. He was a brother-in-law of the king Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po (1604-1642). The king first married bSod-nams

28. *khong rang gi dgon sde rnams dmigs med kyi dbyings su bsngo ba'i rgyas 'debs kho na mdzad 'dug* ... (f. 106a3).

29. *The Tibetan Tripitaka*, Vol. 21, No. 734, Chapter 11.

30. *chos sde chen po der sku gsung thugs rten dang mdo sngags gso rig sgra snyan gyi 'chad nyan 'dzugs pa'i dri gtsang khang kun rar bcas pas mtshon pa'i dge stobs de brgyad stong pa nas bshad pa'i bdud las su song 'dug kyang mdzad pa la dpag na sde srid de chos rgyal zhig yin pa 'dra bsam pa shar/ nged rang gis las sbyor mangs(mang) pa'i stabs kyis ngos mjal dang rgyu 'grul byed ma nus/* (*Dukula*, Vol. I, p. 217).

31. Cf. *PJ* p. 323.

rnam-rgyal bu-khrid, an elder sister of his who died, and later married bSod-nams tshe-brtan bu-khrid, the younger sister.[32]

It appears from the account in the *Sa skya'i gdung rabs* that rTse-gdong zhabs-drung, who was a prominent master, was virtually a prisoner as chaplain at bSam-'grub-rtse, but he seems to have played a vital role in the founding of the monastery by the king. The king himself gave the name bDe-chen chos-'khor to the new monastery. From the account in the *gdung rabs* it is clear that it was intended to be a centre of eclectic approach and was far from being simply an establishment of the Karma bka'-brgyud school as the dGe-lugs-pa sources would have us believed. The king is said to have received a deep impression from the temples at Gyantse when he visited it in his childhood. It was certainly a large Buddhist centre of worship and learning with eighteen temples and four colleges, a fact that is echoed in the statement made by DL in the *Dukula* cited above. rTse-gdong zhabs-drung himself is said to have complained about the monastery being too big and having too many temples due to the unreflective enthusiasm of the youthful king.[33] Since neither the biography nor the *Dukula* mention the name bKra-shis zil-gnon, it was probably created by later dGe-lugs-pa propagandists.[34]

In 1642, the monastery was completely destroyed and looted by the forces of Gushri Khan, comprising both Tibetans and Mongols just before the capture of the bSam-'grub-rtse fort, which was cut off from supplies for several months. Towards the end of the siege rTse-gdong zhabs-drung died in the fort. He was 71 and the king was led to Tashilhunpo after the fort was taken.[35]

The biography is silent on all these points probably due to the painful and fresh memories as only four years had passed since the events took place. However, in the statement of the *Dukula* cited above, DL expresses his regret that such an incident had occurred and describes the destruction of the monastery as "action of the demon" (*bdud las*).

In the rest of the biography, there does not seem to be any great divergence from the accounts given in the *Dukula*. The biography brings the account up to the year 1646. In the third month of the same year dKon-mchog chos-'phel died and DL composed a prayer for the reincarnation of the master.

Abbreviations/bibliography

BS *Bai ḍūrya ser po, dGa' ldan chos 'byung bai ḍūrya ser po* by sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705). Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang 1989.

Dukula *Za hor gyi ban de ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul ba'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa du kū la'i gos bzang* by Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682). Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang 1989, Vols. I-III.

KGZ *dGa' ba'i zlos gar, dPal 'brug pa rin po che rgyal dbang thams cad mkhyen pa dpag bsam dbang po thub bstan yongs 'du'i dpal gyi sde'i rnam par thar pa skal bzang kun tu dga' ba'i zlos gar* by Dus-zhabs-pa dPal-rgyas dbang-po (written in 1657 at Khro-phu dga' ldan byams pa'i gling). MS from the library of Mr. Gene Smith, ff. 175.

MLh *Ma bcos lhugs pa, rGyal khams pa ta ra na thas bdag nyid kyi rnam thar nges par brjod pa'i deb gter shin tu zhib mo ma bcos lhug pa'i rtogs brjod* by Taranatha. Indian edition. n.p., n.d.

PJ *dPag bsam ljon bzang, Chos 'byung dpag bsam ljon bzang* by Sum-pa Ye-shes dpal-'byor (1705-1788), Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1992.

PNy *dPag bsam rin po che'i snye ma, rGyal ba'i dbang po thams cad mkhyen gzigs rdo rje 'chang blo bzang bskal bzang rgya mtsho dpal bzang po zhal snga nas kyi rnam par thar pa mdo tsam brjod pa dpag bsam rin po che'i snye ma* (completed in 1759) by lCang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje (1717-1786), Lhasa, Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, Vols. I-II, 1990.

32. *SD* p. 90.
33. *SD* pp. 91-104.
34. *PJ* p. 323.
35. *SD* p. 105-109.

RSNy *Rab gsal gser gyi snye ma, Thams cad mkhyen pa drug pa blo bzang rin chen tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho'i thun mong phyi'i rnam par thar pa du ku la'i 'phro 'thud rab gsal gser gyi snye ma* by sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1989.

SD *Sa skya'i gdung rabs, dPal ldan sa skya pa'i gdung rabs rin po che byon tshul zhal skong bcas bsdoms shing lhag par dus mchod bla brang pa'i gdung rabs kha yod lag yod du bgrangs pa gdan rabs bcas kyi lo rgyus ngo mtshar srid na 'gran bral* by Kun dga' blo-gros and mThu-stobs dbang-phyug, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1991.

KHA-CHE LUGS AND THE WOOD SCULPTURES FROM CHARANG

Deborah Klimburg-Salter

According to Tibetan tradition, as contained in Tāranātha's *History*, among other sources, Tibetan art until about the 14th century was dependent for its inspiration on foreign sources. Generally Tibetan art is considered to have three main regional schools, east, central and western Tibet. For the earliest periods only the artistic traditions which influenced the formation of the arts of central and western Tibet are discussed. My concern here is the formative period of western Tibetan art 10th-12th centuries.

Until now no consistent methodology has been employed for identifying artistic sources for western Tibetan art. Literary evidence indicates only the broad outlines of this process. Tāranātha tells us that the art of western India influenced Kashmir which influenced Tibet. Scholarship has identified to date, only one example of the influence of western Indian painting on the art of a monastery, Tabo, within the western Tibetan kingdom. The Tabo paintings are dated c. 1042. At least one of the two groups of paintings (Klimburg-Salter 1999/2000) identified with western Indian influence may be a result of a local or Kashmiri workshop. In this example, in the Tabo *'du-khang* Life of the Buddha murals, the western Indian influences had been fully integrated prior (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 129) to their production. We have no way of defining the area where this workshop originated. As this example shows, the possible geographic area is large. Literary sources do not assist us. The Tibetan term to designate a Kashmiri art school, *Kha-che lugs*, is rarely used and then only in sources considerably later than our period (Klimburg-Salter forthcoming).[1]

Let us take a parallel example: Tāranātha identifies Pāla-Sena and Nepalese art as sources for the Buddhist art of central Tibet. Here, however, a large body of art historical and archaeological evidence, some of it *in situ*, is available. Thus, allowing one to define precisely the northeast Indian images and their visual vocabulary. Only after defining the northeast Indian and/or Nepalese sources that may have served as proto-types for Tibetan art (Allinger 1998 and Bautze-Picron 1998) can we discuss the character of early central Tibetan art, which derived from it. Ideally, it is this method, within the limited resources available for Kashmir, which I would like to propose. That is, to build up a corpus of securely attributed works of Kashmir art which may have served as proto-types for the earliest Buddhist art produced under West Tibetan patronage in the 10th-12th centuries. It is then necessary to define the vocabulary of forms used at different times and at different sites in Kashmir.

All scholars since Tucci (Tucci 1949: 273 f., Rhie 1999: 49; Rhie coins the term "Kashmir Himachal Pradesh") have described both monumental and portable western Tibetan art, such as from Tholing (mTho-ling / -lding), Tabo, and Alchi, as being Kashmiri in inspiration without a single specific reference point. Vitali (e.g. 1996: 273) uses the hybrid term "Kha-che art." Quite simply, too little later Buddhist art has survived in Kashmir itself and the archaeological record is inadequate. Despite Naudou's (1968) exhaustive analysis he was unable with certainty to identify any of the Tibetan names for places or temples in Kashmir. Nonetheless, the literary tradition as well as the colophons to the translated texts in the Tibetan canon *(bKa'-'gyur* and *bsTan-'gyur)* confirm the collaboration of Kashmiri pandits with Tibetan lamas, many of whom worked at Tholing, the main monastery of the kingdom of sPu-rang Gu-ge in the 11th-12th centuries, now divided between India (Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh) and West Tibet.

The translation of the texts was essential to the process of establishing "correct" Mahāyāna Buddhism as the state religion of the kingdom of sPu-rang Gu-ge. The dynamic process of transferring the Mahāyāna Sanskrit tradition to Tibet was of such great importance that later historians came to refer to this period as

1. *Kha-che lugs* is also used to designate a Vinaya school.

the *phyi-dar*, the Later Diffusion of Buddhism. The physical environment for this religious practice were the newly founded temples supported by noble patrons and their main preceptor, The Great Translator Rin-chen bzang-po. His biography records that the temples (according to pious tradition 108) were each provided with the three supports (*rten-gsum*) of body, speech, and mind—paintings and sculptures, texts, and *mchod-rten*. Rin-chen bzang-po's biography (henceforth called the *Biography*) lists large numbers of texts and artifacts which were donated to specific temples. In order to fulfill this large demand, the *Biography* tells us both artists and artifacts were brought by the Great Translator from Kashmir to the kingdom of sPu-rang Gu-ge. In addition objects must have been made locally. Thus, the *Biography* describes a process of the transmission of Kashmiri visual culture to the western Tibetan kingdom analogous to the translation of sacred Sanskrit texts into Tibetan. But the artistic evidence for this process is extremely scarce. Not one of these objects can today be identified with certainty. Nor has it been possible to define precisely the artistic sources and the visual vocabulary which inspired the art of the newly founded temples in the kingdom of sPu-rang Gu-ge, that is until now.

The purpose of this short study is to briefly discuss three of eight large-size wooden sculptures in the temple of Rang-rig-rtse in the village of Charang, Kinnaur. The temple is listed in Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography* as rTsa-rang (Charang) where it is included in the list of 21 *yul-chung*. The temple was first identified by Tucci (1933: 57, 33), but never visited by him because of its present inaccessibility. It is precisely, however, its geographic position which explains the importance of the temple.

The Charang wooden sculptures will be compared to three inscribed metal sculptures which can be securely attributed to Kashmir. The life-size clay sculptures in the Tabo *'du-khang* serve as our stylistic benchmark for the Indo-Tibetan art of the mid-11th century.

We shall first briefly review the historical setting for the Buddhist art of Kinnaur during the time of the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge in the 10th-12th centuries. Secondly the art historical problems presented by a study of the Buddhist art of Kashmir, 8th-11th centuries, which served as the prototypes for the newly emerging Indo-Tibetan art. This is followed by a comparative analysis of the two groups of images, I will conclude with some theoretical considerations concerning the study of this formative period in the art of western Tibet.

The Historical Context

Local historians believe that Kinnaur was included in the Gupta Empire; subsequently the region was annexed by the Hephtalites when they occupied Kashmir. Lower Kinnaur, during the 7th century belonged to the empire ruled by Harṣa of Kanauj. According to the tradition of the kings of Bashahr, Kinnaur was the eastern most territory of their realm. Their earliest capital (from the 5th century) was at Kamru in the Sangla valley, then Sarahan and finally their winter capital was moved to Rampur, so that their administrative center moved steadily westward towards Shimla (Bajpai 1991: 31).

Buddhism may have been present in some form and in some places in Kinnaur from a relatively early date but we have no firm evidence for this. There is only one structure which may predate the missionary activities of the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge, the small temple of Ribba (Klimburg-Salter, in print).

The art historical evidence for a Buddhist presence in Kinnaur during the period of the *phyi-dar* is abundant. Temples and artifacts which can be approximately dated to this period on the basis of stylistic and literary evidence occupy an area from Sangla valley in the west to the Shipki pass in mNga'-ris, Tibet (map 1). Although a few of these monuments, such as a small Lo-tsa-ba lha-khang in Tangi (map 2), have not yet been identified in literary sources, most of the other known temples are mentioned in Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography*. Of the entire area ruled by the dynasty of the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge in the 10th-12th c. only the Gu-ge heartland has more foundations dating to this period. See the map attached for villages where temples or large scale images, which were originally to be associated with temples of this period, are located. Many of these temples, on the map, contain wooden sculpture or fragments of wooden architectural elements in a Kashmiri style.

The only archaeological evidence for the presence of this dynasty in Kinnaur is the so-called Ye-shes-'od *rdo-ring* in dKor in modern Poo (sPu in Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography*) (Klimburg-Salter 1994b: 55, fig.1), according to Petech, this *rdo-ring*, may have been erected by the *lha-sras* Na-ga-ra-dza, the same royal lama whose name appears on the Cleveland Buddha. He is also represented together with his father *lha bla-ma* Ye-shes-'od in the Tabo *sgo-khang* (Klimburg-Salter 1997: 85).[2] Also in Poo is a small *lha-khang* attributed by local tradition to Rin-chen bzang-po, containing three clay sculptures which may well date to this period (Luczanits 1996: figs. 11, 11a, 11b, 12).

In the small temple of Ropa (Ro-pag of the *Biography*) are a number of wooden sculptures attributable to this period (Klimburg-Salter 1994a: 69) (as will be discussed below). Particularly important are two life-size wooden sculptures (Klimburg-Salter 1994a: figs. 57, 58; Luczanits 1996: fig. 10) of Vajrapāṇi and Avalokiteśvara which are also in the Kashmiri style (see map).

The history of Kinnaur based on Tibetan historical sources remains to be written, however, we can summarize some general points.[3] Modern Kinnaur, which in part is called usually Rong-chung in the pre-modern Tibetan texts, seems to have belonged to the Tibetan empire from an early date. The *mNga'-ris rgyal-rabs* refers to Jo-bo rgyal-po as king of Khu-nu (Vitali 1996: 75, l. 16) and 'Od-'bar-rtse as king of Rong-chung (Vitali 1996: 75, l. 17). As the text is organized geographically Rong-chung and Khu-nu must be next to each other. However it is clear, as Vitali also noted (Vitali 1996: 268) that there were two Rong-chung, one in present-day upper Kinnaur (according to the *Biography* sPu [= Poo] is in Rong-chung) and one in Gu-ge. The lower Spiti river (present day Kinnaur where Nako (Na-go) and Chango are located) appears to have been the region known as Cog-la in the Tabo inscriptions. This area includes the lower Spiti valley and Tabo as far as Po. What remains to the west of Poo may have been called Khu-nu (as the area around Charang is still called) or Rong-chung, as on Cunningham's map (map 3). Vitali believes that lDe-gtsug-mgon, the youngest son of Nyi-ma-mgon, included Khu-nu in his realm, thus after his untimely death: "Pi.ti, Khu.nu and Zangs.dkar were merged into Gu.ge Pu.hrang" (Vitali 1996: 293). The history of the term Khu-nu is unclear. This citation only demonstrates that by the end of the 15th century when the *mNga'-ris rgyal-rabs* was written, the designation Khu-nu, as distinct from Rong-chung was in use. The exact boundaries of Khu-nu during this period are unclear.

Thus, Khu-nu belonged to the kingdom inherited by Ye-shes-'od. It would be reasonable to assume that the four larger temples built by Ye-shes-'od in his earliest missionary phase were located in the areas most important to the kingdom at that time. Kinnaur is not mentioned in this context.[4] According to Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography* several temples were founded later in Kinnaur, they appear in the *Biography* in the list of *yul-chung* — smaller places (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1985: 33-36). The largest, and therefore probably the most important of these, is the monastery of Rang-rig-rtse in Charang on the Indo-Tibetan border where the eight wooden sculptures are preserved. We shall return to this temple below. However, Vitali suggests that some other minor temples may have been built in Khu-nu during Ye-shes-'od's first missionary period, but this is uncertain. According to this interpretation Rong-chung was the larger area and included Khu-nu. The latter was the western border area of the sPu-rang Gu-ge kingdom.

2. As this stone was erected in a dragon year Petech (1997: 235) proposes 1024 (A.D.). I have also earlier proposed that the title used in this stone inscription *dpal lha btsan-po lha bla-ma Ye-shes-'od* indicates a later date than the Tabo inscription of 996. The name sPu occurs on the stele which is to be associated with modern Poo, actually the present village/market place. Poo is subdivided into several residential groupings lower downhill, including the area called 'Khor where the stele is still to be found in the middle of the vegetable field. My several attempts to locate ancient walls among the stone rubble yielded nothing.

3. The most important primary sources are the different edition of Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography* and the *mNga'-ris rgyal-rabs*.

4. According to various historical sources summarized by Petech (1997) in c. 996, four main temples were founded: Tholing (Gu-ge), Kha-char (sPu-rang), both now in Tibet, Nyar-ma (Ladakh), and Tabo (Spiti), Himachal Pradesh.

Buddhist Art in Kashmir

Kashmir was at times politically powerful and at other times weaker, but its culture dominated all the surrounding regions. Because of its importance, the boundaries of Kashmir have been discussed many times. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Cunningham and Stein noted that over time not only had the political boundaries changed but also the topographic landmarks, such as riverbeds. According to the first boundary commission of 1846 the Kashmir administrative territory included Ladakh and Zanskar and was bordered by Lahul and Spiti to the east, Kinnaur is not mentioned in this discussion.

Historians usually use the term "Kashmir" to refer to the Kashmir valley, formed by the upper Jhelum river basin. Earlier in the Buddhist period Baramulla was the capital, later Shrinagar. At times when Kashmir was politically powerful, as in the early 11th century, its domains extended southward to Lohāra and eastward to include Kulu. Based on literary evidences, Naudou concluded that the Tibetan term for Kashmir, Kha-che referred to the areas to the west of Tibet. Rin-chen bzang-po's *Biography* refers to Kinnaur (Rong-chung) as a border region. Indeed, further to the east, Tabo monastery in the Spiti valley was, according to the *Blue Annals*, a place where Sanskrit pandits came to learn Tibetan. Naudou combined Tāranātha's references with the information obtained from many other sources, particularly colophons of texts included in the Tibetan Canon, which record joint translation projects between Sanskrit pandits and Tibetan lamas.

Kashmiri cities and monasteries in the Tibetan sources are known only by their Tibetan names, which are not now unequivocally identifiable. According to the colophons, most of the translators worked at Tholing. Tibetan literary evidence depicts a brilliant Buddhist intellectual tradition, embattled in its homeland, which migrated eastward towards Tibet over a several hundred-year period.

If we compare map 1 which shows the foundations of the 10th-12th centuries with one prepared by Naudou (1968) of "Greater Kashmir" during the same period, we see that the south-eastern border of Kashmir reaches the region of modern lower Kinnaur. Thus, we may imagine the role of the Kinnauri monasteries as an intermediary between Kashmiri institutions and the main institutions of the kingdom of sPu-rang Gu-ge at Tholing and Khojarnath.[5]

Let us look at the historical context. Support of Buddhist institutions in Kashmir was in steady decline following the demise of the Karkoṭa dynasty. We know that Queen Diddā, who died 1003, patronized Buddhism as well as Brahmanical foundations. Only one new Buddhist foundation is known during the long reign of Anata and his wife Sūryamatī (1028-1063) (Kalhaṇa, book 7, pp. 180-185).

During this time, according to Kalhaṇa, Kashmir was sinking into economic chaos and misery. Contributing factors were the incompetence of its ministers and certainly the high taxes exacted in order to support the defense against the Muslim armies attacking from the south. It is not to be forgotten that Mahmud of Ghazni was only stopped at 1015 and 1021 at Lohāra, which is the southern boundary of the Kashmiri Empire. However, despite, the unstable social and economic life a high level of artistic and intellectual creativity was achieved. It is during this time that some of the greatest of Kashmiri scholars lived, to mention only two, Abhinavagupta at the end of the 10th/beginning of the 11th century and Kṣemendra, whose *Avadānakalpalatā* was completed in 1053. It is also in the 11th century however, that the texts identify many famous scholars who sought patronage and refuge at the monasteries supported by the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge. In 1076, the great council at Tholing attracted famous scholars from a wide geographic area to discuss various points of Buddhist doctrine.

In this context it is particularly interesting to remember the following well known two sculptures. Both objects are inscribed[6] and mention historical personages. The inscription on the Sugatisandarśana Lokeśvara

5. Both monasteries possessed monumental wooden portals, which Tucci considered to have been produced by Kashmiri craftsmen.
6. According to scholarly consensus as well as laboratory examination, the inscriptions may be considered contemporaneous with the fabrication of the objects. And both objects may be securely attributed to Kashmir.

(Fig. 1) in Śārada records the name of Queen Diddā who reigned from 980 to 1003, while the Tibetan inscription on the Buddha image records that the icon belonged to the royal preceptor *lha btsun-pa* Na-ga-ra-dza, (Fig. 2) the younger son of the king of sPu-rang Gu-ge, *lha bla-ma* Ye-shes-'od. This prince was active at the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century.[7]

What is interesting here is that while art historians have always considered these sculptures to be roughly contemporary (c. 1000 A.D.), they are never discussed in the same context. The standing Buddha sculpture has always been taken to be an example of the Indo-Tibetan art of the *phyi-dar* in the western Himalaya. The seated Bodhisattva has always been considered a superb example of the art of Kashmir or greater northwest India. But in fact, each image represents a standard Kashmir image-type. The Buddha with the Tibetan inscription (Fig. 2) belongs to a large series of images with the same rectangular stepped pedestal and a distinct post-Gupta figure style (e.g. Pal 1975: Pl. 27, 28).

The Queen Diddā image, stylistically and iconographically, is the model for a number of slightly later images, e.g. a Lokeśvara in the British Museum (Klimburg-Salter 1982: Pl. 31) and a Sugatisandarśana Lokeśvara in the Pan-Asian Collection (Pal 1975: Pl. 50).

A third sculpture of a jeweled Buddha (Fig. 3) seated between two stūpas likewise bears an inscription however in an earlier script, Proto-Śārada (see Klimburg-Salter 1982: Pl. 9 for the inscription and detailed description). The inscription identifies the patrons as a nobleman and his wife who may be associated with the realm of the Gilgit Śāhī in northern Pakistan. Following the work of von Hinüber, the object may be dated to c. 734.

What have these three sculptures in common? First, they can now all be attributed to Kashmir workshops (Reedy 1997: 144-175), despite the fact that two of the patrons are not from Kashmir. All the patrons belong to the nobility and all three images are of superior technical accomplishment. Each image may be identified with a popular image type. But the most interesting feature that they have in common is that each of these image-types were copied in wood at a somewhat later date at the farthest eastern boundary of the Kashmir kingdom, or seen from another perspective, on the western boundary of the western Tibetan kingdom. Thus, finally allowing us to identify specific Kashmiri image types which served as the inspiration for western Tibetan art created in the kingdom during the 10th-12th centuries, and to trace the process of adaptation of the Kashmiri image-type into the western Tibetan stylistic idiom.

The Temple

The temple of Rang-rig-rtse is located on a promontory which lies at 3,500 meters high, about two kilometers from the village of Charang. The temple is placed at the conjunction of three passes leading south-west to India, the Charang and Mangsu passes, and the Khimkul pass leading eastward towards Tibet. This latter pass actually provides the most direct route to Tholing, the religious center of the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge, as one can see here on Cunningham's 19th century map (map 3). The evidence from the 15th century art and manuscripts still in the temple, suggest that Rang-rig-rtse may have been connected to Tholing monastery (Klimburg-Salter forthcoming). Rang-rig-rtse is the main temple on the *parikrama* around the Kinnaur Kailash (map 2). All the other chapels on the *parikrama* are also attributed to Rin-chen bzang-po and indeed appear to be quite ancient.

A complex of buildings belonging to the recently founded nunnery today surrounds the temple (Fig. 4). As these buildings are included in the *skor-lam* (ritual path of circumambulation), it seems reasonable to presume that the present complex represents the original concept of the monastery.[8]

7. Vitali (1996) proposes that the image was made between 998 and 1026 when he died. In 996 in the Tabo *sgo-khang* Na-ga-ra-dza was still called *lha-sras* (prince).
8. Because of the strategic location between the three passes which connect India with Tibet, the military border police also have stationed themselves on this promontory.

Rang-rig-rtse is the largest Buddhist temple in Himachal Pradesh, but little remains from an early period. There was substantial repainting following the 1976 earthquake. Most of the remaining wall paintings date to ca. late 15th-16th centuries. The clay images of the Vairocana *maṇḍala* also have been repaired but the core goes back to an early date. This temple will be treated in a separate study (Klimburg-Salter, forthcoming). The architecture and the architectural decoration will not be discussed here. The architect John Harrison, assisted by Michael Falser, prepared the drawings published here during our field work in 1998.

Indo-Tibetan Sculptures

In the temple of Rang-rig-rtse eight portable wooden sculptures have been preserved. The only feature of a comparable age in the temple is a carved wooden architectural element which probably once was a lintel and is now used in the door swell of the portal to the assembly hall. Thus there was almost certainly a temple here that can be considered contemporary with the wooden sculptures.[9] Because of the extreme isolation of the temple I propose as a working hypothesis, that these sculptures are the fragmentary remains of sculptures originally intended for this temple. A comparative stylistic analysis will allow us to identify three stylistic phases in the development of wooden sculptures through the 11th century. I use here the term Indo-Tibetan for these sculptures because this sculptural style evolved from an Indian (here Kashmir) prototype but the sculptures were made for a Tibetan patron and were intended for use in a Tibetan cultural context.

While it is not possible here to discuss all eight of these sculptures in detail I would like to note that some of them may have belonged to a Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* (e.g. Figs. 5-10). The figures are well finished on the back and there is no evidence that they were ever attached to the wall. There is a low ledge running around the back of the temple under the present clay *maṇḍala* — the figures may once have stood there.

From an iconographic point of view one of the most interesting sculptures is the crowned image (Fig. 9) which I have very tentatively identified as Maitreya in the form the deity takes when occupying the eastern quarter of the outer gallery of the main circle (de Mallmann 1986: 58) of the Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* NSP 19 (*ibid.* 57ff). This identification is based on the figure of Akṣobhya in the central part of the crown and the fact that the image appears to have been originally painted blue, (de Mallmann 1986: 245) note the fore legs and other sections of the figure where blue is clearly visible underneath the more recent red paint.[10] The figure sits on a shallow double lotus in the meditation posture under an elaborate pointed arch which is the superstructure of a throne supported by two lions and the small figure in between, a typical Kashmir motif found in many contexts. The deity wears a three-pointed jeweled cape over a naked torso. The cape has a wide floral fringe; the center of the cape is filled with a wide necklace. He also wears jeweled arm and wrist bands. The three-pointed crown, each section adorned with a Buddha figure, sits on a jeweled band tied behind the head with the bands flying out stiffly behind. There are rosettes above each ear and large round earrings. No part of the monastic gown is to be seen engraved on the body except for the folds of the monastic robe which are shown beneath the crossed legs. A *mālā* which is here represented as a rope goes around the shoulders and under the legs in a "u" shape. A comparison with the main element of the Rockefeller crowned Buddha (Fig. 3) demonstrates that the Charang Buddha is a simplified version of the former image type. It would seem in fact that the prototype was not completely understood. The Charang Buddha may in fact be a third generation, or later copy. The monastic gown, indicated by the folds lying on the lotus, otherwise is completely missing. The beautiful articulation of the *mālā* of the Kashmir sculpture is also lost and the gently swelling rounded petals of the lotus throne are drastically reduced.

There are also significant differences in the figure style, whereas the Kashmir sculpture shows the typical slightly rounded belly of the period, the Charang sculpture is flat. At first glance the pleasant oval

9. The evidence for the chronology of the present temple is presented elsewhere (Klimburg-Salter forthcoming).

10. The overlarge throne and lion supports would suggest Vairocana. Singh 1997: 886 identifies this figure as Mañjuśrī.

face of the Bodhisattva with the gently arched eyebrows appears close to metal sculptures attributed to Kashmir, but closer examination of the facial features shows certain divergent elements most notably the totally round bulbous chin. Interestingly this feature is represented in the late 11th century-paintings from Nako by a round shaded circle on the chin (Klimburg-Salter 1997: 215, fig. 226). Another point of comparison to the art of Himachal Pradesh is the manner in which the crown sits on the head. In the Kashmir sculpture of the c. 8th century the hair is only barely indicated, indeed in the Rockefeller image the crown may rest on a cloth band. In the clay sculptures of the Tabo *maṇḍala* (Klimburg-Salter 1997: 103, 107, e. fig. 102) the crown sits high on the hair. Compare the detail (*ibid.* fig. 102) with the representation of the hair in Fig. 10 here, in both cases the thick black hair is pulled up from the forehead and the hair forms parallel curved lines, at the center of the forehead the hair forms two swirls moving outward from the center line. This feature is derived from the art of Kashmir and can be seen on numerous images from the late 9th century. The thick stiff ribbons of the crown placed flat against the pointed halo may be compared to a wooden sculpture of Vajradharma in Ropa temple in upper Kinnaur attributable to the second half of the 11th c. (Luczanits 1996: 75, fig.13). Many of the stylistic features we have mentioned here are found in the stylistically related sculptures figs. 7 and 8. In addition, in these sculptures the torso and belly are visible and have a more exaggerated variant of the four-part belly, the typical articulated rounded belly and secret navel associated with the art of Kashmir late 9th-10th century. Thus it does not seem possible to date these wooden figures (Figs. 7, 8, 9) in Charang earlier than the 11th century. As we shall see these sculptures may be the earliest of the Charang group.

The large image of Lokeśvara (Figs. 11 and 12) is very close to the Queen Diddā sculpture of Sugatisandarśana Lokeśvara (Fig. 1; see also Pal 1975: Pl. 51 a,b) in the Śrī Pratap Singh Museum, Shrinagar. Although the Charang figure has two instead of six arms other details, which are similar, are the fan-shaped topknot, the triangular form of the Buddha Amitābha, the arrangement of the hair over the forehead, the lotus seat placed on a raised round drum, the tripartite pedestal to allow for two small attendant figures, which are however different. On the other hand one sees a similar tendency to exaggerate the familiar Kashmiri stylistic features. The Charang Lokeśvara has a harder, stronger "V-shaped" line forming the eyebrows and the nose, the mouth has a more pronounced bulbous lower lip, and again we find the round protruding chin. Rather than the subtle Kashmir modeling, the modeling of the torso is here more pronounced, likewise the drum is more elongated, rather disproportionate. Quite different is the manner in which the hair spills out from the top knot in thick braids flowing over the shoulders. This is a typical feature found in several wooden sculptures in Himachal Pradesh, the standing Bodhisattvas as well as the small wooden images in Ropa (Luczanits 1996: fig. 3). Thus again we see a transformation of the Kashmiri image type into a more local idiom. This Charang Lokeśvara could not be dated early than the late 11th, 12th centuries.

The seated Buddha on a high articulated platform (Fig. 13) diverges from the Na-ga-ra-dza Buddha in that the latter is standing, and also has a rounded more graceful figure style. As we have also noticed in Fig. 11, the figure style of the Charang Buddha is represented in a flatter, more schematized manner; only the ripple effect at the edge of the robe breaks the monotony of the flat unarticulated torso. Similar to the profile of the head of the Kashmir Buddha is the rounded shape of the uṣṇīṣa and the tight snail curls of the hair. Similar to the Charang Buddha is Fig. 11, in that there are also the sharp angular lines describing the facial features, but here (Fig. 13) the exaggerated pouting mouth merges with the chin. We see in Fig. 13 a further step in the direction of the local stylistic tendency to a flatter, thinner figure style. Furthermore, the Indo-Tibetan image resulting from a transformation of the Kashmiri image types, although most numerous at Rang-rig-rtse, are found throughout Kinnaur.

Unfortunately, the evidence provided by the wooden sculptures of Rang-rig-rtse is limited by their portable nature. Their high quality, particularly figures 7, 8, and 9 and close coincidence with Kashmiri prototypes might suggest production by Kashmiri artists. On the other hand all the images show the

misunderstanding of certain elements which suggest that the artist may never have seen an example of the Kashmiri prototype, which speaks rather in favor of local artists trained in a workshop perhaps once associated with Kashmir masters. It is of course impossible to say. And one asks oneself how important this question really is. Does it make much difference if we are dealing with a Kashmiri artist himself, or a descendent of a workshop begun or directly influenced by the presence of Kashmiri artists?[11]

Let us return to the map which shows the religious foundations of the time of the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge (map 1). Two of the 10th-century foundations in West Tibet, Tholing and Khojarnath, had monumental wooden portals believed by Tucci to have been products of Kashmiri workmen. Both these temples are connected to Kinnaur by the route passing near Charang. Whether dealing with monumental portals in West Tibet or the portable sculptures in Charang, the unresolved problem remains the same.

This problem naturally leads us to the question of the definition of *Kha-che lugs*. As we have demonstrated that the Charang sculptures followed Kashmir image-types (whether from originals or first generation is irrelevant), it would seem reasonable to assume that the Charang sculptures be designated as in the Kashmir tradition or school.

The more interesting question involves the process of cultural interaction and the transmission of visual forms. Perhaps one may imagine a situation in the visual arts analogous to the process of translation of the sacred texts, which was always accomplished by teams of Indian and Tibetan scholars working together. In the 11th century, Kashmir was experiencing serious economic and political disruption. However, the centuries old Buddhist monasteries, famed throughout India and Inner Asia still housed Buddhist masters of considerable reputation whose skills were eagerly sought by the kings of sPu-rang Gu-ge and their preceptors in the process of founding numerous new temples throughout the western Himalaya. Thus, there may have been workshops of local craftsmen working for generations with the occasional input of Kashmiri masters. These Kashmiri artists, together with religious scholars, traveled eastward to flourishing monasteries in West Tibet where together with local artists they created the Buddhist renaissance known to the Tibetans as the Later Diffusion of Buddhism.

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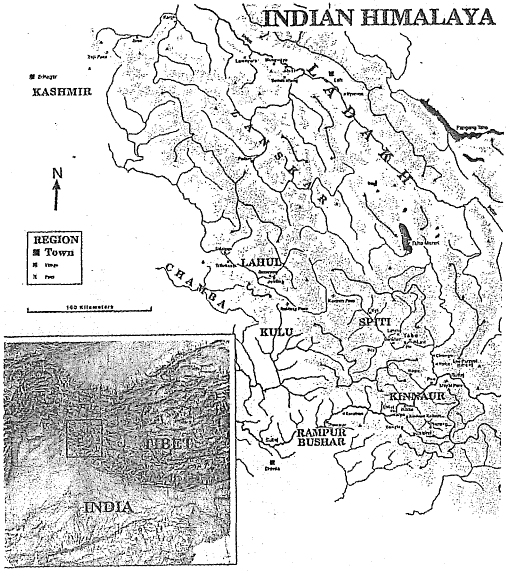
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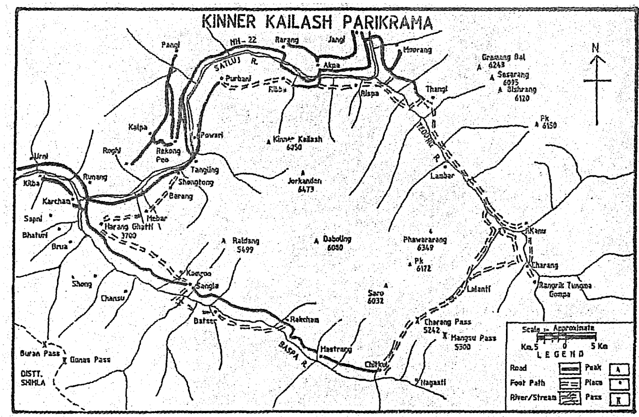
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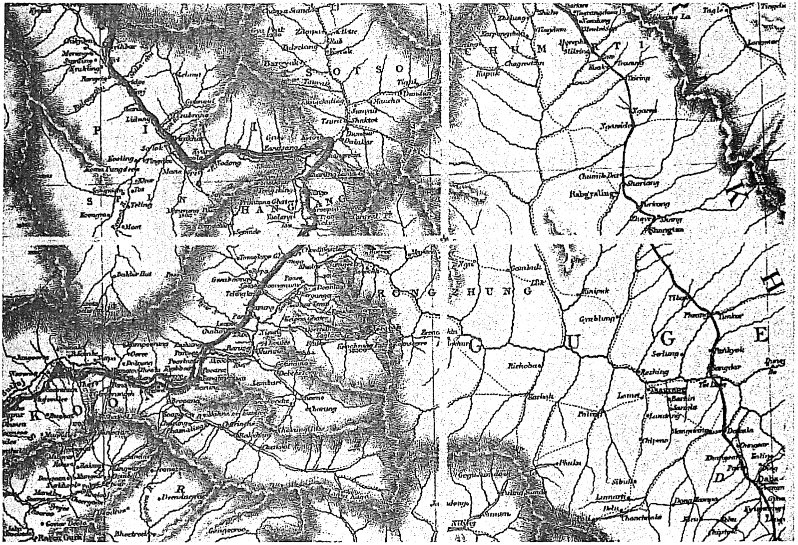
Illustrations



Map 1: Indian Himalaya (after Klimburg-Salter 1997: 22)



Map 2: Kinner Kailash parikrama (after Sanan and Swadi 1998: 278)



Map 3: Upper Kinnaur, Spiti, Rong-chung (after Cunningham 1854)



Fig. 1: Sugatisandarśana Lokeśvara, Śrī Pratap Singh Museum
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1977, WHAV Vienna)

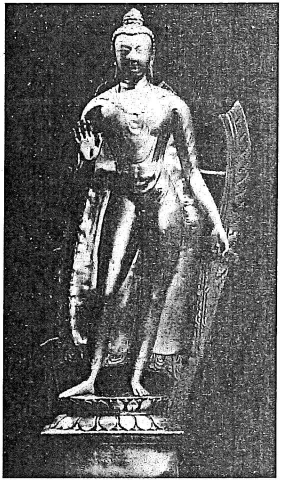


Fig. 2: Buddha, The Cleveland Museum of Art
(after Pal 1975: fig. 26)



Fig. 3: Crowned Buddha, The Asia Society:
The Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection

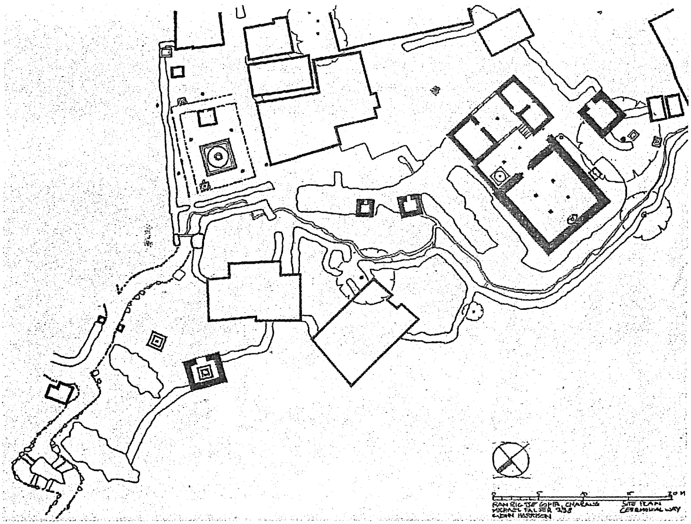


Fig. 4: Site plan Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(J. Harrison and M. Falser, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 5: Buddha, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 6: Female goddess, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 7: Vajrasattva, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 8: Bodhisattva, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 9: Maitreya, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 10: Maitreya, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 11: Lokeśvara, Rang-rig-rtse monastery, Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)

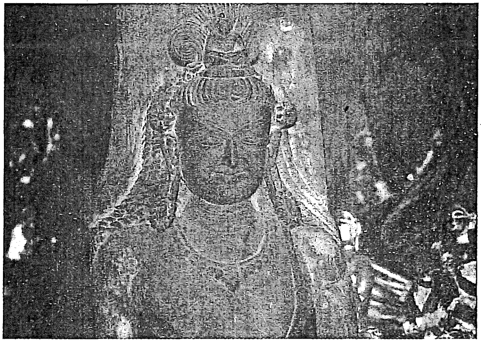


Fig. 12: Lokeśvara, Rang-rig-rtse monastery,
Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)



Fig. 13: Buddha, Rang-rig-rtse monastery,
Charang, upper Kinnaur
(D. Klimburg-Salter 1998, WHAV Vienna)

DID BUDDHA MEAN TO TEACH TANTRAS?

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(Jerusalem)

Very Big Questions are usually avoided in academic philology. There are excellent reasons for this well-known fact. The desire not to step on the toes, and thereby perhaps provoke the wrath, of colleagues who have different points of approach to the broader issues must be high on the list, but there is also the possibility Big Questions might brush aside or violate the details our more careful scholars tend to value above all else, as if inspired by William Blake's "For every minute particular is holy." When I was made privy to the plot to spring a surprise volume on E. Gene Smith, my first impulse, given the shortness of the notice, was to transform a long footnote from my current literary research into a short paper made denser, rather than clarified, with a lot of footnotes and bibliographical references. I soon had second thoughts about it. I thought, "Why not offer something large and problematic, even controversial? Certainly E. Gene Smith has hugely generous spirit which can easily accommodate arguments with which he may or may not agree. He deserves something of more consequence." That is why I decided to go back to work on this long paper, more than ten years in the making, which I had many times thought to publish, but then held back, for reasons just given, among still others. Now that "tantra," along with a few other arcane areas like "Hermeticism," has carved out a small and precarious yet culturally significant place for itself in the academy, it could be a cause for celebration, or not, depending on what we mean by it, of course, but also depending on where we intend to go with it.

Introduction: Intention, Ethics, and Dealing with Emotion

The intentions of the Buddhas are deep and difficult to fathom. Buddhist revelations entail not only the revelation of their oral and written forms of transmission, but the revelation of their meaning to those who hear or read them. The discussion here is almost entirely limited to textual, literary documents available in libraries, and obviously makes no claims to momentous revelations of its own.[1] It is very much about "revelation," in the sense of eruptions and influxes of transcendent truths into our mundane world, but on the assumption that these "interruptions" have very much to do with the times in which they occur, which would justify bringing historical insights to bear on the content of revelations even when these revelations demand other types of insights not of the chronological kinds.

If we were to speak about the tantric elaboration and de-elaboration of Mahāyāna, the first would be essentially anti-philological, while the second would be a somewhat different philological approach to the tantras than has been customary. These two superficially contradictory perspectives may hope to find a common ground.

The first perspective is based on an arguable assumption about what the Buddhist radical might be. We may seem to play with words, since the word "perspective" presupposes some vantage point as well as a presumption about fundamentals: What is it that makes Buddhism Buddhism? This is neither rhetorical nor a question with answers better left unsaid. One of the basic concepts that emerge from my general study of Tibetan Buddhist culture (although "culture" as a generalized concept may serve here just as well) is that it is a lived-through process which not only allows for, but frequently encourages a range of perspectives (= assumptions about what is fundamental). Culture is never the property of a single person with a single perspective. Shifting and developing perceptions of culture are themselves part of culture. This makes understanding culture the epistemological equivalent of the mind knowing itself (a knowing agent seeking

1. I thereby think there is here very little likelihood of betraying tantric "secrets" since the material used is published, and therefore and in that degree "public knowledge." Mantras, initiations, tantric pledges, tantric activities, substances and the like are often placed under the seal of secrecy (and some reasons for this secrecy are alluded to in the passage by Sog-bzlog-pa which appear later on in this paper), but these subjects will hardly be touched upon.

to understand a complex of which the knowing agent itself is a contingent part). These comments do undoubtedly apply to intra-cultural as well as extra-cultural understandings. Buddhism, and particularly Mahāyāna Buddhism, recognized the potential value of such a broad range of individual approaches that it often appears laughable when scholars insist that there was, for any time or space, an "orthodox doctrinal position." Sometimes the heat of scholarly insistence on this point (and the use of the very word "orthodoxy") only succeeds in conveying to us the limitations of their disciplinary approaches. A number of Buddhist doctrinal "positions," to the extent they may be called such, are positioned at different points in the process leading to Enlightenment, which means that they are not "ultimately" well founded, and were never meant to be. Ways of thinking, including Buddhist ways of thinking, may be wrapped around deeply embedded karmic seeds, may be just epiphenomena of an illusory self-concept ("conceited" or "narcissistic" are words that spring to mind). Philosophical views, however liberal and enlightened they may seem, may be self-serving in a very deep sense. Abhidharma Buddhism considers afflicted views (*lta-ba nyon-mongs-can*), including views held too rigorously or given priority over other things, to be one of the six main obstacles to Enlightenment. If there is a Buddhist radical, it has little to do with fundamentalisms of the text-based kinds and renders the very idea of "philosophy" problematic.

I must first say, before going on to give my preferred answers for this Very Big Question of the "Buddhist radical[s]," and then justifying them, that I am not in the business of looking for an "original" Buddhism as such,[2] but for basic factors that account for its distinctive continuity. Such generalized observations are dangerous, and are more generally assumed than they are openly posed. This makes it all the more important to pose them openly.

My answers roughly falls into two parts, dividing Buddhism into two not-unconnected levels, those of devotion and thought. On the level of devotion is Refuge in the Three Jewels, in Buddha[s], Dharma (the teachings of the Buddha[s]), and the Buddhist Community (pre-eminently the most venerable of the monks and nuns, but also engaged laypersons or lay renunciates). This devotion is primarily a matter of "conduct," acts of devotion through the offering of goods and services, and acts of worship through the devotee's bodily, verbal and mental powers.

This devotional complex also involves commitment to a particular social ethic, the ten virtues, which are also divisible into the bodily (1-3), verbal (4-7) and mental (8-10):

1. Renouncing the taking of life.
2. Renouncing the taking of things not given.
3. Renouncing promiscuous sexual conduct.
4. Renouncing lying.
5. Renouncing slander.
6. Renouncing harsh speech.
7. Renouncing gossip.
8. Renouncing miserliness.
9. Renouncing thoughts of harming.
10. Renouncing counterproductive perspectives.

These bodily, verbal and mental acts of devotion and ethics find corresponding levels in the objects of devotion, a theory that was nowhere more highly elaborated than in Tibet. In Mahāyāna, and thence in Tibet, we find the first object of Refuge, the Buddha[s], trifurcated into Body, Speech and Mind (the second of these covering the same territory as the second Refuge). Each of these three may be represented by a "receptacle" (*rten*), an icon. Body receptacles include images; Speech receptacles - sacred books; Mind receptacles - *stūpa*s or *caitya*s, commemorative monuments and reliquaries. These are considered worthy to receive such acts of devotion as light offerings, circumambulations, prostrations, special rituals, praises, prayers and aspirations.

2. This is why I have termed this perspective anti-philological. It is also anti-evolutionary. The usual procedure of the evolutionist philologist is to find traces of an uncharacteristic trend within the wider tradition, claim that it is the original strand just because it is so much different from the tradition as we know it, and then finally accuse the tradition of being untrue to its "actual" origins (or, alternatively, they may excise uncharacteristic trends by dubbing them "later interpolations"). This sort of etymologizing scholarship has, for better or worse, a subversive effect, that may or may not be consciously intended. It is also part of the cultural process. "Original Buddhism" is, in any case, too far removed from the period of focus of this study to be very relevant.

It may well be objected that there are historical developments in the cult of the Buddha image, for instance, which surely didn't exist in the beginning, and in various devotional practices, and I by no means intend to deny change. That would be very un-Buddhist indeed. I am arguing for a continuum of devotion and devotional practice as an inextricable part of Buddhism the religion, and also that Buddhism always involves the subordination (even when not "absolute") of the believer's bodily conduct, verbalizations and thought to the bodily, verbal and mental levels pertaining to Buddha[-s/-hood]. Insofar as some modernizing Buddhists and buddhicizing Moderns have denied this component, insisting on a purely rational "Buddhism of the head,"[3] they have been, on the whole, anti-traditional, placing themselves off to the margins of the present discussion.

While the second "non-development," that of thought, is usually treated as a separate topic, it may also be seen as a further form of subordination to Buddha-thought, and of the tenth ethical virtue, renouncing perspectives counterproductive to Buddhist goals. I have attempted to trace this historical non-development in a separate work entitled "Illusion Web - Locating the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* in Buddhist Intellectual History," an ironic title, since the web/palace imagery, providing visualizable cues to the nature of the Buddha's enlightened vision (called variously relativity, interdependently originating, realm of dharmas, voidness), seems to be unlocalizable in the history of Buddhism, since it shows up at every turn, or "shines everywhere" so to speak.[4] The web/palace as objective experience (Enlightenment) pertaining to an experiencing subject (Enlightened One) is a dualism rendered entirely problematic in the higher meditative concentrations (meditation being another indispensable even if not universally practiced component of Buddhism) and finally overcome in the non-duality of the actual experiencing of Enlightenment where even the word "experience" is problematic, only to reappear out of compassion for those who still need help in finding and pursuing the Path. The view of phenomenon as interdependently originating, having neither a first cause nor any simple or singular lines of causation, is a Buddhist constant which, I believe, comes prior to Buddhist philosophical construction (meditative experience of the same *by someone* being the real priority). It is *assumed*, and at the same time is most generally assumed to be far beyond ordinary human understanding; hence faith and devotion, even on the "intellectual" level, are not far to follow.

Buddhist tantra, more correctly termed Vajrayāna, is a theatrical elaboration of these same basic elements which, being Buddhist, it presumes. This elaboration is meant to effect an active engagement of the bodily, verbal and mental powers in the replication or approximation (perhaps a "dramatic pre-enactment") of the Enlightened One's Body, Speech and Mind as an expedient in their actualization. On the ritual/contemplative level, this means powerful gestures [body], powerful words [speech], and powerful thoughts [mind]. On the yogic level it is physical posture, mantra repetition and mental yoga (visualization, concentration and various other meditation practices), all of it summed up for us in the Sanskrit word *sādhana*. A lot of ink (or its verbal equivalent) has been spilled by learned professors about what the defining characteristic of *tantra* might be. As far as Buddhist tantra is concerned (and arguably Hindu tantra as well), it is the employment of *sādhana* that makes tantra. In other words, it isn't an academic category at all, which makes the professors vaguely dissatisfied or more plainly perplexed.

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3. This phrase was borrowed from Dr. Gregory Schopen, whether or not it originated with him. Another now common way to refer to a similar phenomenon (within a broader context) is "Buddhist modernism," a phrase which evidently was coined by Alexandra David-Neel, the famous Tibet adventurer and popularizer. "Protestant Buddhism" is a term being used by Buddhological scholars in a similar if somewhat different sense. Just as Protestants have an "apostolic" tendency to deny Christian tradition (together, ironically, with the "apostolic succession") and go straight to a reconstructed point of Christian origins, so "Protestant Buddhism" goes straight for a "primitive Buddhism" which owes much to their own rationalist mind-sets brought to bear on a field of literary evidence thoroughly weeded of contrary evidence by applying evolutionist philology. This "Protestant" form of Buddhism, apparently largely the product of Protestants rather than Catholics, is then ingested and digested by the Buddhist traditions themselves, contributing to the development of "Buddhist modernism."
4. "Shines everywhere" is the meaning of the name of Vairocana, the central of the five Tathāgatas.

Although if left unsaid it may not be obvious, the ten virtues are positive counterparts of ten non-virtues, and these ten non-virtues are motivated by the three or five "poisons,"[5] "poison" being a stock metaphor for passions (the primary negative emotional poles), so much so that its metaphorical usage is rarely even recognized as being such. The poisonous roots of the non-virtues of mind are most obvious.[6] Miserliness is motivated by the poison of attachment/desire, thoughts of harming by the poison of aversion/hatred, and counterproductive perspectives by the poison of stupidity/indifference.[7] The correspondences for body and speech non-virtues may be a little less obvious, but understandable with slight reflection. Predominance of non-virtues motivated by a particular poison lead to rebirth in a particular (and particularly undesirable) realm of existence, as the first Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa said in a public talk:[8]

> In order to avoid the sufferings of hell realms, it is necessary to avoid the reasons [for being born in them]. Therefore it is very important not to perform those of the ten nonvirtues which are done mainly out of aversion/hatred, even though your life is at stake. When aversion/hatred is not abandoned, in the case of ordinary Refuge takers (Buddhists), they lack the four principles of cultivating virtue [1. Not to scold when scolded. 2. Not to return anger for anger. 3. Not to uncover the faults of one who uncovers one's faults. 4. Not to strike back]. In the case of Bodhisattvas, they must cultivate love because all sentient beings have been their mothers, and love and aversion/hatred cannot live together in the same place, while it is not difficult to consume the virtues of a thousand aeons [in a moment of anger]. In the case of tantrics, they must imagine all beings of the biological universe as male and female deities. When anger is engendered toward them there is no way to encounter the visualized deity.[9] It might just be possible to abandon aversion/hatred [entirely], but even when a "contemplative absorption of great love" is spoken of, it will be understood to mean that since the hatred has just dug in deeper it does not manifest itself.

The Karma-pa continues his analysis in the same vein with the other passions, but it is most important for the following discussions to keep in mind the deep and unmanifest passions. The final sentence shows that the sophisticated Buddhist was not to be satisfied with the trances of universal love and cosmic unity, because even in the midst of them there might lurk passions "sleeping in concealment" (*bag la nyal-ba*, or *bag-nyal*), or "hidden formations" (*bag-chags/vāsana*).[10] This sort of religiously-practical depth psychology was already

5. See HOLT, *Discipline*, especially chapter five, "The Structure of Disciplined Actions," for evidence and arguments for the passionate etiology of non-virtues according to *vinaya* texts. The three poisons are sometimes in Mahāyāna and usually in Vajrayāna increased to five by the addition of greed/envy and pride/slander. They may be said to cover basically the same moral/motivational territory, the same all-too-human obsessions, as the "minute-to-multiplied afflictive mental states" (*nyon-rmongs phra-rgyas*) or the "root afflictions" (*rtsa-ba'i nyon-rmongs*) of the Abhidharma works (but in the Abhidharmakośa one does not detect any use of the "poison" metaphor).
6. Demerits of mind override those of body and speech, since the latter always involve the mental.
7. Indifference in the negative sense, to be carefully distinguished from the positive virtue of equanimity (*upekshā/btang-snyoms*), a form of tolerance which involves both a patient, longsuffering attitude ("turning the other cheek") and especially an absence of prejudice. Equanimity is one of the Four Immeasurables (almost always found at the beginnings of tantric ritual meditations, it should be noted), and therefore goes nicely together with love, compassion and rejoicing in the happiness and accomplishments of others.
8. The context is a recorded public teaching (*tshogs chos*) by Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa. See KARMA-PA I, *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, pp. 270.5-271.5.
9. This Tibetan term, while essentially untranslatable, has often been translated as "god" or "deity." In most contexts, *lha* does not mean "deity" as an entity which exists in its own right and brings other things into existence; to the contrary, it means an entity that exists only as a mental projection "created" by the devotee (a *yi-dạm-gyi lha*, called such because it epitomizes the *sādhaka\ā's* high aspiration for enlightenment). Also called *lha* are certain Hindu "deities" (*deva*) such as Indra and Brahma, as well as local Tibetan "lords of the soil" (*sa-bdag*). *Lha* may be both worldly (*'jig-rten-pa*) and trans-worldly (*'jig-rten las 'das-pa*). *Lha* is also frequently used as a respectful epithet for rulers and for the recently deceased. The feminine form is *lha-mo*.
10. Note that since this is a work by a student of Tibet, rather than of India, Tibetan terms are generally given priority over Indic ones; Sanskrit terms are occasionally supplied only in favor of those who might find them more meaningful.

present in some sūtras; witness, for example, the "deeply hidden pains" in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. One might think we were preparing to embark on a discourse on psychoanalytical theory, but that is not our aim here.

According to Theravāda teachings even to this day, the main method of dealing with emotional states is to give up the negative and take up the positive. Following are the "Four Perfect Abandonings" (*yang-dag-par spong-ba bzhi*) which are four among the thirty-seven factors of Enlightenment. Rather than "abandonings" (although this is the understanding of the term in Sanskrit and Tibetan sources), the Pali may more correctly be understood as "endeavours":[11]

1. Avoiding [negative mental states].
2. Overcoming [negative mental states].
3. Developing [positive mental states].
4. Maintaining [positive mental states].

The following Tibetan scheme may be overly simplistic. It isn't especially clear which school is intended by the Lesser Vehicle. Certainly Theravāda teachers today are likely to say that avoidance, while effective in some degree, is at some point insufficient, and go on to recommend some form of "transformation." Great Completedness (Rdzogs-chen) texts, both Rnying-ma-pa and Bon, recommend a three-fold set of possibilities for dealing with negative mental or emotional states.

Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna):

A. Abandoning/avoiding (*spong-ba*).

Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna):

B. Transformation (*bsgyur-ba*)
   - (a) Bodhisattva transformation, primarily by "antidotes" (*gnyen-po*), and
   - (b) Transformation through Vajrayāna methods, which might be described as "reversals" (*log-pa*, *bzlog-pa*) or "tantric elaborations."

C. Releasing/disentangling (*grol-ba*), which might also be understood as "tantric de-elaboration," as advocated in Great Completedness of Rnying-ma and Bon Schools or, in the New Schools, in Great Seal (Mahāmudrā).[12] The naive view sees this releasing as "giving free rein" to the negative emotions, although the Tibetan term implies a disentanglement, which, I would further suggest, means a freeing up of the space they usually would occupy.

Transformation might all along have been implicit in the practice of abandoning, just as releasing might have been implicit in the practice of transformation. Rather than ascribing newness of one over the other, as if the "later" supplanted the "earlier," what we see here may just be a more sophisticated program, with different approaches to negative emotions made available as needed to persons at different stages of development.

Vajrayāna poetics and/or hermeneutics

Vajrayāna is theater. It is a theater with a very Buddhist audience in mind, one of the givens that too often escapes scholars, and their theories on tantra and its development have, on the whole, denied or ignored this. The following discussion of "literary critical" development of Buddhist tantra does not claim to displace or belittle those other theories, rather to supply a perspective which I have found too often absent but which is, I think, essential. We should start *in medias res*.

> Tragedy, then, is a representation of an action that is worth serious attention, complete in itself, and of some amplitude; in language enriched by a variety of artistic devices appropriate to the several parts of the play; presented in the form of action, not narration; by means of pity and fear bringing about the purgation of such emotions (Aristotle, *Ars Poetica*, chapter 6).[13]

Aristotle goes on to recommend (in chapter fourteen), the killing of those near and dear as the most effective way of arousing pity and fear in the audience.

11. See Chapter Two of GETHIN, *Buddhist Path.*
12. For English-language sources, from Rnying-ma-pa perspective, we could recommend NAMKHAI NORBU, *Rigbai Kujyug* and *Dzog Chen.*
13. Cited according to the translation of DORSCH, *Classical Literary Criticism*, pp. 38-39.

The Aristotelian concept of *catharsis* has been discussed endlessly. My only reason for bringing it up is to point to what I see as a parallel concept in tantric "drama."

> Against Plato's objection to poetry on the grounds that it excites the emotions, which ought to be kept under control, Aristotle, while agreeing that it does indeed excite the emotions, claims that in doing so it releases them, and hence has the effect of reducing them.[14]

I do not think that *catharsis* for Aristotle was ever limited in meaning to a lightheaded aftereffect of seeing an engaging drama, as some latter-day interpreters would have it; it was an adjunct process (*mimêsis*), a simultaneous production, since if the tragedy is to be effective, it must keep us in its grasp, making us co-participants.[15] Indian dramatic theorists, along with Indian poetic and artistic theories in general, differ from Aristotle primarily in the number of emotions - for him, two, pity and fear; for them eight, nine or ten - that drama may unleash in its audience to good effect.[16] These are the *rasa* (*nyams*).

1. Erotic/enticing (*shṛṅgāra / sgeg-pa*).
2. Wrathful/aggressive (*raudra/drag-shul*).
3. Heroic/athletic (*vīra/dpa'-bo*).
4. Compassionate/pitiable (*karuṇā/snying-rje*).
5. Ugly/revolting (*bibhatsa/mi-sdug-pa*).
6. Laughable/humorous (*hāsya/bzhad-gad*).
7. Marvelous/astounding (*adbhuta/rmad-byung*).
8. Frightening/terrifying (*bhayānaka/'jigs-rung*).
9. Peaceful/quieting (*śānta/zhi-ba*).

Some Indian architectural manuals advise that pictures representing all nine of these emotions could be displayed in palaces or temples, but not in individual homes, even if this had become the fashion. They suggest that people display only pictures for erotic, ludic, and pacific emotions in the home.[17] There are many references to these in Indian and Tibetan tantric literature, as, for example in the *Hevajra Tantra*.[18]

The European dramatic "unities" of action, time and place also bear some similarity to the five "unities" of a tantra. These "unities," called *phun-sum-tshogs-pa*, or, in Sanskrit, *saṃpanna* (with connotations of totality, wholeness, completeness and perfection), are most frequently the unities of Teacher, Place, Teaching, Time and Audience [capitalized because they are very common words used in a special way, being in some sense hypostasized]. These "unities" were considered critical for correct interpretation of tantras because they are interdependent. Hence the nature of the Teachings, as well as their manner of presentation, is largely dependent on the other four. Together, all five form a larger unity which delineates the entirety of the realm of discourse (within which the discourse itself is only one interdependent component). Hence they are crucial to traditional tantra exegesis. It is not sufficient to say "the Buddha said." One must ask "in what setting?" and "to whom?" and even "by what form of Buddha?" In brief, Buddhist theories of interdependent causation are self-consciously allowed to reflect back on Buddhist views about the production of Buddhist scriptures themselves, a point that has on the whole escaped the reflections of recent Buddhologists, but certainly requires more serious consideration.

Now, in an attempt to sum up the discussion thus far, we must say that ritual actions and meditative visualizations, rooted as they are in Buddhist forms of devotion, are believed to link with something basic about human beings and about Buddha[-hood] as well, otherwise there is no justification for their reputed power to lead toward Buddhist Enlightenment. The "future" Buddhist goal is taken as a "present" groundwork. This linkage is denoted by *sahaja* (*lhan-skyes* or *lhan-cig skyes-pa*), which P. Kvaerne, after

14. DORSCH, *Classical Literary Criticism*, p. 17.
15. Aristotle in the *Poetics* is primarily concerned with *mimêsis* on the level of artistic production, but he does not neglect audience response. Aristotle's use of this word does not always mean simply "imitation," but something close to "assistance in accomplishing something." See DORSCH, *Classical Literary Criticism*, p. 26.
16. See HABERMAN, *Acting* (especially chapter 2: "Religion and Drama in South Asia," pp. 12-29), for a very insightful discussion of the linkage between religious and dramatic actions in India, including some suggestive remarks about the similarities and differences between classical Greek and Indian dramatic theories, the *rasas* and so forth.
17. BOSE, *Principles*, p. 82.
18. SNELLGROVE, *Hevajra Tantra*, vol. 1, p. 111.

careful consideration,[19] has translated as the "simultaneously-arisen," a translation which is basically sound, but which I would prefer to modify somewhat to "simultaneously (or parallelly) produced" when it serves as an adjective, and "parallel production" when (or if) it is used as a noun.[20] There is a partially analogous term in the poetics of Daṇḍin, *sahokti* (*saha-ukti*), which means "paralleled expression" in which disparate objects are made to undergo, or undertake for poetic ends, the same actions at the same time. This allows an entire complex of related or interacting objects, thoughts, and so forth, to be linked with another such complex. Another way of stating the foregoing is to say that the drama of ritual action and visualization in tantra engages the participant through the passions in order to transform (*bsgyur*) and/or release (*grol*) them, and it accomplishes this, at least in part, by methods held in common with literary, visual and dramatic art, and the tantras themselves are quite self-conscious of this. Given the fact that literary criticism of the *alaṃkārika* and tantra flourished in India during the same centuries, it would be more remarkable if this were not the case.

Tantras and the literary productions of the *alaṃkārika* share a certain similar level of sophistication, have a similar sense of elitism. They frankly do not care whether or not they will be understood by the non-initiate. If people are bewildered or shocked, so much the better for them. That is no concern of the high literary aesthete or of the tantric initiate. Neither, on the other hand, would either of these elitists bother to express themselves if there were no fellow initiates who could appreciate their work. But there is a difference in that the ends are different. While the *littérateur* aims for pleasing and striking, but in any case skillfully accomplished, effect (and hence aggrandizement by their peers), the tantric aims ultimately for Buddhist Enlightenment.[21] Buddhism, denying any substantive continuity or inherent identity to the "self," goes on to play in tantra with the concept of the self, with the self-image, through imagination, through imagination programs with close analogies to birth and death processes. All Buddhism uses "imagination," since the goals of Nirvāṇa, etc., have to be imagined until they are realized. In this Buddhist context, imagination means goal-oriented visualization (*dmigs-pa* means both visualization and intentness on an objective). Still, with a sense of catholicity that it shares with (and develops on the basis of) the major Mahāyāna sūtras, tantra would have no problem in accepting the *modus operandi* of the *littérateur* as "means" (*upāya*). The tantric scriptures are, after all, literature. Why then should they not have literary aims as well?

Although apparently little appreciated by others, the importance of literary studies for Buddhist studies was recognized by some Tibetan scholars, as for example, Bod Mkhas-pa Mi-pham-dge-legs-rnam-rgyal:

> Poetic science is a supremely valued subject for study. The scriptures on inner science [i.e., Buddhism] are themselves in the form of poetry. All the other sciences use it as well. Therefore it is as important as the iris of the eye for seeing all knowables.[22]

Tāranātha declares that, while some tantras use the "four methods" of interpretation, all of them employ the "six ends" (already discussed above).[23] Sa-skya Paṇḍi-ta says that statements like "Father and mother are to be killed" that appear in some of the sūtras, tantras and poetic treatises are "figurative" or "non-literal" (*sgra ji-bzhin ma yin-pa*).[24]

'Jam-dpal-dgyes-pa[25] says,

19. See KVAERNE, "On the Concept" and KVAERNE, *Anthology*, pp. 61-64.
20. KVAERNE, *Anthology*, p. 62, doubts that Buddhist tantras ever use the term as a noun except as shorthand for longer expressions. I have not been able to make up my mind on this point, but prefer to give Kvaerne the benefit of any doubt. In the Tibetan language itself the question is largely irrelevant, since adjectives, as in many languages, may be employed as nouns (we know they are doing this when there isn't any noun nearby for it to qualify).
21. Not just magical feats, since, in the absence of Buddhist goals, we could hardly call it Buddhism, not that Buddhist tantra denies to those who desire them the pursuit of magical feats; it refuses to stop at them. See the discussion of magic and magical motivations by Sog-bzlog-pa to follow.
22. MI-PHAM-DGE-LEGS-RNAM-RGYAL, *Snyan-ngag-gi Bstan-bcos*, p. 18.
23. TĀRANĀTHA, *Collected Works*, vol. 13, p. 427.5.
24. See SA-SKYA PAṆḌI-TA, *Mkhas-pa 'Jug-pa'i Sgo*, p. 108.

The profound Vajrayāna as well
is sealed with the "six ends" and the "four methods."
It has been set down with the stainless reasoning
that accompanies the oral precepts of the lineages.

What Sog-bzlog-pa says about it

Sog-bzlog-pa has a long but especially revealing discussion of the rhetorical aims of the tantras and the necessity for rhetorically informed interpretation.[26] He begins with two suggestive quotes from Buddhist treatises, then gives four alternative positions which he finds unsatisfactory, and finally gives his own explanation, supporting it with scriptural as well as commentarial citations:

It says in the *Madhyamakahṛdayakārika*:[27]

In order to point to non-self and the like, and to point to the greatness of the Three Precious, [the Buddha taught] in accordance with the student's Vehicle.

The Ācārya Abhaya said in his *Munimatālaṃkāra*:[28]

"The Mahāyānists whose every deed is a personification of compassion and who teach stainless Total Knowledge - what sort of person with a mind would condemn them? Only one who does not really know faults and qualities or who considers qualities to be faults or who hates those who have qualities would condemn the Great Vehicle."[29]

Some say, "Even if the Mahāyāna Secret Mantra literature [might have been] taught by *yakṣas*, *rakṣasas*, and the like, it [could not have been] preached by the Tathāgata because it teaches things contradictory to the way of Dharma preached by the Victor such as taking life and taking what was not offered."

Some commentators on the *Pariśodhana Tantra* say, "These explanations about sexual conduct were done as a favor to the deities of great desire such as Lord of the Dance (Naṭeshvara). If this were not so, there would be some contradictions in the precious holy Dharma preached from the mouth of one Tathāgata. [This would demonstrate] unskillful means. These are like the words of a madman, since doubts will prevent beings from being liberated."

Some early Tibetans have said, "While surely preached by the Tathāgata, such things as taking life, taking what was not offered, wrong sexual relations, and telling lies have been taken literally, and this creates wrong practices in the profound way of secret mantra."

Some others have said, "All the discourses of Buddha are exclusively of the uncompromisingly presented (*nges-dòn*) sort. Otherwise the Bhagavan would tell lies."

All these statements display a lack of understanding. They have not realized that the Bhagavan made statements that were intentional,[30] flexibly-intentional, literal, metaphorical, adjusted, and uncompromisingly presented. He did this in order to lead some aspirants [to the Path] and in order to prevent others from using them on their own in the absence of a master.

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25. Ten folio block print in personal possession entitled *Don Rnam-par Nges-pa Shes-rab Ral-gri* (folio 7 *verso*, line 4).
26. SOG-BZLOG-PA, *Collected Writings*, vol. 1, pp. 555 ff. Compare discussion in SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE, *Responses*, p. 460.5 ff., which will be referred to in following notes; it is quite similar, but sometimes supplies additional explanations.
27. Tibetan title: *Dbu-ma Snying-po* by Bhavya, translated into Tibetan by Atisha and Tshul-khrims-rgyal-ba (TOH. 3855).
28. TOH. no. 3903. Tibetan title: *Thub-pa'i Dgongs Rgyan*. This work was composed in the thirtieth year of king Rāmapāla, which would place its composition in about 1130 CE. It was translated by the author himself at Nālandā in collaboration with the Tibetan translator of Spyong-sho (= Dpang-sho), Gsal-ba-grags. The author is known in Tibetan as 'Jigs-med-'byung-gnas-sbas-pa (i.e., Abhayākaragupta).
29. This quote is entirely lacking in the version in SOG-BZLOG-PA, *Collected Writings*, and has been supplied from SOG-BZLOG-PA, *Gsung Thor-bu* (p. 197). This latter version has been consulted, and sometimes followed, in the following translation.
30. The translation "intentional" for *dgongs-pa* (*abhiprāya*) is perhaps not adequate. See the discussion in BROIDO, "Abhiprāya and Implication in Tibetan Linguistics." I think it is important to note here that what I take to be

There are four types of statements intended to be flexible.

In order to induct some aspirants into the perfect Path, he made such statements as those about spontaneously generated sentient beings and form [and other *skandhas*] as existing. These are flexibly-intentional statements [adjusted for the sake of] inducement.[31] With respect to the three substantialities[32] [generalized concept substantiality, extrinsically determined substantiality, substantiality thoroughly established in its own right], he made statements about the non-existence of all dharmas, about them being like a mirage, or being like space. Such statements are philosophically flexibly-intentional statements. As a way of neutralizing such things as condemnations of the Buddha, he made statements such as those about the Supreme Vehicle.[33] These are called antidotal flexibly-intentional statements. On account of their profound import, he changed the letter of his statements. Such statements are transmuted flexibly-intentional statements.[34]

As the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*[35] says,

There are four ways of flexibly-intentional statements.
One is [adjusted] for hearers, one for substantialities,
one for converting faults,
and one for the profundity of the utterances themselves.[36]

As examples of antidotal flexibly-intentional statements, the Buddha said, "I myself in those times became the Buddha Vipaśvī (Rnam-par-gzigs)." In this way he meant to point out the sameness of Dharmakāya. [This is the intention of indicating sameness.][37]

Also, "If you serve Buddhas as many as the sands of the Ganges, you will hear these teachings." In such statements he had another purpose in mind [besides the plainly obvious one].

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something working on the level of literary analysis Broido carries onto the very high and perplexing levels of linguistic philosophy. I have no wish or present need to follow his trail. I assume that this discussion by Sog-bzlog-pa is telling us the same general types of things that a Christian theologian might say about the literality of a scriptural passage, or that a literary critic might say in an effort to divine the significance of a novel. Still, I would not deny that the discussion might have some extrinsic interest or implications for linguistic philosophy. I would especially recommend BROIDO, "Killing," to anyone who would like to further pursue the issues of tantra interpretation.

31. These statements are specifically aimed at Hearers (Śrāvaka), according to SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE (*Responses*, p. 461.1), who are unable to comprehend teachings about "form empty of form" (*gzugs gzugs-kyis stong-pa*).

32. "Substantiality" (*ngo-bo-nyid*) in a Buddhist context is synonymous with voidness. Buddhist philosophy is generally counter to materialist and essentialist positions (see, for example, the "knows the absence of essence as essence" in a following quote), and the fact that they employ the terms of those positions should not be allowed to obscure the very different way they are used in Buddhist writings. This is a quite consistent Buddhist practice, and should not be mistaken as anything so trivial as "playing with words."

33. SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE (*Responses*, p. 461) supplies the example (which he also gives for "intention of indicating sameness"), "I myself became in those times the Buddha Vipaśvī." According to him, this was said in order to neutralize the doubts of those who might think that Śākyamuni was inferior to other Buddhas just because he lived in an impure environment and had a shorter lifespan than the earlier ones.

34. SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE (*Responses*, p. 461.6) explains "transmuted flexibly-intentioned statements" by saying that the Buddha spoke in a transformed way in order to avoid the censure of some who might think that the particular teaching is too lofty, and therefore not as good for them as other teachings.

35. This is the famous *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* by Maitreya. Usually agreed to be a fourth-century text, it was translated into Tibetan by Dpal-brtsegs with the Indian scholar Śākyasiṃha (along with a commentary on it). This appears to be the most important Indian treatise for the transmission into Tibet of this particular method of explaining Mahāyāna hermeneutics.

36. For some reason, Sog-bzlog-pa does not cite the verse from the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* that actually lists the four types of flexibly-intentioned statements. This verse has therefore been supplied from SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE, *Responses*, p. 460.5. For another, different, citation of this latter passage, see DPA'-BO, *Mkhas-pa'i Dga'-ston* (1986), p. 542.

37. The bracketed statement is taken from SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE, *Responses*, p. 460.1.

"Those who have made merit and aspirations for Sukhāvatī will take birth there." Such statements have a different time-frame in mind [than what seems to be implied].[38]

"Generosity is inferior, while discipline is supreme." This was expressed with the inclinations of the [particular] person in mind, the textual traditions and reasoning determining the course of the words and meaning [in the preceding cases].

When [the Buddha] was explaining things so that the course of words and meanings was not determined by authorities (precedents) and reasonings, but indicating directly the teachings with just the [right] expression, this is [what is meant by] "literal." To give an example,

You should not kill living beings.
Neither should you take what was not given.
If you want accomplishments, you will not engage
in lies or lustful practices.[39]

Indicating things through "reversals" (*snrel-gzhi*)[40] of words and meanings, the course of which was determined by authorities and reasonings are the "non-literal" (metaphorical) expressions.

Statements in which all *dharmas* are demonstrated as voidness are "uncompromisingly presented," while those which are aimed at sentient beings, personalities and humans are "adjusted presentations."

The *Samādhirāja*[41] says,

Among the Teachings of the Sugata Teacher we must recognize
a special category of sūtra sets that are "uncompromisingly presented."
All those scriptures in which sentient beings, personalities and humans are the ones being taught
must be recognized as "adjusted presentations."

This subject is treated in detail in the *Saṃdhinirmocana*,[42] to which the reader is referred.

While the Bhagavan's advice was to renounce killing, yet there are those potential Buddhists who find this renunciation intimidating or threatening. For [Buddhist teachings] are not meant exclusively for qualified persons with minds thoroughly purified with discipline and contemplative absorption, but even those who have not renounced killing are suitable for induction into this holy Vehicle.[43] Oblivious to the foregoing, they hear agreeable words[44] which induce them to take Refuge in the Three Precious, generate the Thought of Enlightenment and so on. Following their induction, and at least by the time they are intimidated by the direct vision of the perfect Path's significance, they will definitely turn away from killing and so forth. [The statements] serve rather to turn [their propensities for killing and so forth] into a basis for their gradual induction.

38. SANGS-RGYAS-RDO-RJE (p. 460.3), gives a different example here: "By holding (remembering) the name of Tathāgata Rin-chen-zla-'od, you are Enlightened."

39. A possible source for the quote is the *Sarvadurgati Tantra* (SKORUPSKI, *Sarvadurgati*, p. 102).

40. *Snrel-zhi* is an unusual word used in older Tibetan translations (*BLANG*, p. 287.6.) which later became nearly obsolete. It is used in a citation from the *Avataṃsakasūtra* collection (a *sūtra* which, by the way, was never entirely made to conform to the New Translations standards) found in KONG-SPRUL, *Shes-bya Kun Khyab,* vol. 1, p. 176.13. It means "oblique, transverse" (*'phrel*) or "reversed, transposed" (*logs*). It may also mean to bypass steps or states that would ordinarily be considered indispensable (*thod-rgal-ba*), or to switch the order of those steps around (*'chol-ba*). The corresponding Sanskrit word must be *vyatyaya*, or *vyatyasta.*

41. TOH. no. 127.

42. See the recent books on the subject of this *sūtra* by John Powers.

43. One could cite here the passage from the *Suvikrāntacinta Devaputra Paripṛcchā Sūtra* (TOG PALACE, vol. 69, p. 814.3):

When one bears with the anger, killing, and bondage of all sentient beings
and does not reject those sentient beings,
this is the perfection of Method.

44. "Words of pleasing aesthetic impact" (*nyams dga'-ba'i tshig*). This passage underlines the strategic use of misunderstanding that was alluded to earlier.

"Statements about killing and so forth are not intended literally, but elastically." This the Great Translator Rin-chen-bzang-po has explained in detail using the *Dgongs-pa Lung-ston*[45] Tantra, the *Rdo-rje Rtse-mo,*[46] the *De-nyid Bsdus-pa* (*Tattvasamgraha*), and other scriptures.

Since these things are dependent on the oral precepts of the lama, the purposes are concealed, the words altered, and statements such as those on killing have been made.

Ācārya Śākyamitra says in his *Kosalālaṃkāra*,[47]

Why, it may be asked, are such statements as this made by Buddha in elastic expressions?
It is in order to prevent unauthorized use of mantras by those who happen to see the volumes.
Without the oral precepts of the teacher, they must never attain achievements.

The *Sgron-ma Gsal-ba*[48] says, "Intending that they must not be used without a teacher, in order to indicate particular activities in words that violate [the norms of ordinary] worldlings, the Buddha said such things as "All sentient beings are to be killed," "enjoy telling lies," "covet the property of others," and "always act on your desires."

Taking "killing" literally is great among the sins that are grave by their very nature (*rang-bzhin-gyi kha-na-ma-tho-ba*), and was preached to be the most important cause of being reborn in lower realms. Because they would violate the teachings of the Buddha, statements on "killing" are not to be taken literally.

For further explanation, this quote from the *Sarvarahasya Tantra*,[49] where "killing" is intended to mean the killing of the self-concept, will serve,

All aspects of all sentient beings
are subsumed by the constituents (*dharmas*) of your own mind.
If you slay through application of the non-self of dharmas, it is only your
self that will die.

Ācārya Ḍharmakīrti also said, "Statements such as 'If you slay all sentient beings are applicable to Voidness, meaning utter annihilation," and further,

Performed on the *skandhas* which have no real substance,
it is done by thoughts which are product of "peaceful abiding" meditations.
Performing this sort of killing
falls within the context of the Supreme Vehicle.

In other cases, "taking life" may be said with the intended meaning of slaying the emotional disturbances, slaying the discursive thoughts, slaying the views which see substance in momentary aggregations (*'jig tshogs la lta-ba*). The *ācāryas* of the past have explained these things in detail. Likewise, statements on stealing, wrong sexual practices, and telling lies are not literally intended. The *Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra*[50] says,

Whatever the Total Knowledge belonging to the Completely Enlightened
One may be, it is conceived as a substance
and whoever would rob Him of it must be coveting the possessions of others.
One whose purpose is a single objective,

45. TOH. 444. The *Dgongs-pa Lung-bstan-pa zhes bya-ba'i Rgyud* (*Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra*), translated by Rin-chen-bzang-po together with Dharmaśrībhadra. This is an "explanatory tantra" (*bshad rgyud*) connected with the *Guhyasamāja Tantra.*

46. TOH. 480. The *Vajraśekhara*, translated by Karmavajra and Gzhon-nu-tshul-khrims (an associate of 'Brog-mi). This is said to be an explanatory tantra of the Yoga class.

47. TOH. 2503. This is a commentary on the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, translated by Rin-chen-bzang-po.

48. The *Pradīpoddyotana* by Candrakīrti. See discussion in BROIDO, "Killing," pp. 91-93.

49. TOH. 481. It is an explanatory tantra for the *Catuṣpītha*. The Tibetan title is *Thams-cad Gsang-ba'i Rgyud*, translated by Padmākaravarman and Rin-chen-bzang-po. For a translation of the following quote, see WAYMAN, "Sarvarahasya Tantra," p. 526 (verse 15).

50. The same tantra previously cited.

to have perpetual congress with the way things are,
will delight in desiring the same for sentient beings
and lust for the supreme attainment.
Telling about two interdependent productions, the internal, or subjective
one, and the one of external objects as well
is sheer delight in telling lies,
as the yogi's context is non-contextual.

Whatever this Total Knowledge beyond the world might be, these [statements are] actually restrictive, serving toward its achievement. Hence, taking it as a sort of supreme substance, through methods of perfectly appropriating this and other things that pertain to the Tathāgata, they are produced within ones own continuum, and this is called "robbing others of their property."

In the same way, perpetual application [congress] to the non-dual and even-toned by way of fixing ones sight on the perfect Total Knowledge and Realm of [All] Knowables is [actually] a restrictive [measure] on desire. Enjoying this sort of thing is [what] "enjoying desire" [means].

The just-cited Tantra also says,

Conventional-adjustment and strict-meaning truths.
These are the two organs.
What is called "pairing" (*yuganaddha*)
is their nondual congress.
Through congress with no distinctions between them
everything falls under their provenance.
This is the ultimate mode of the Great Lust of all Buddhas.

All external and internal dharmas covered by the environmental and biological realms are neither eternal nor unmade,[51] but still they are products of interdependent origination, and dependent on their particular causes and conditions. Therefore, to teach that they are illusory and marked by falsehood and deception is to tell falsehoods. At the same time, these very [dharmas] are, in strict meaning truth, supported by a groundwork which lacks substance [devoid of substantiality].

Furthermore, it is as it says in the *sūtra*,

O offspring of *lha*, everything is false and mirage-like,
I also am compelled to teach in such a manner. Hence [I] tell lies.

Whatever the Buddha may have taught in a literal way pertaining to coercive magical actions he taught that they have to be done by those who are capable of truly achieving the purposes of others [i.e., not out of selfish desires], because they are immaculate personages with exceptional aspirations, they have clairvoyant powers, and their ritual actions are done correctly. Under any other circumstances, [the statements] would not be [literal].

If it is said that [tantras] are not Buddhist scriptures because they have such statements about slaying and taking what was not given, then this would most certainly apply equally to the other Baskets, since they have them as well.

Such words of advice [given by Buddha?] as the following one taken from the *Aṅgulimālasūtra*[52] [help show] his wide usage of elastic expressions,

I do not adhere to the rule of renouncing taking what was not given.
The way of robbing the property of others is one I thoroughly endorse.
The thing that was not given is known as Awakening.
This no one has [ever] bestowed on anyone.
Just because the Bhagavan sat beneath the Awakening Tree,

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51. Note the ambiguities due to conflicting readings in the two textual sources at this point.
52. TOH. 213. It may be that these words are actually from the mouth of Aṅgulimāla.

you did not receive anything. [Your obscurations] were not destroyed.
This is how all the teachings are.
This is the supreme teaching.

Another *sūtra* says,

The father and mother are to be slain.
If the king, the two kinds of pure [priests], the surrounding country, their audiences included, are conquered,
the one who does so becomes pure.[53]

This is interpreted as follows. The father in this passage is the seeds, the hidden karmic formations. The mother is thirst, the thoughts which adhere to and thirst for the latter (in the preceding statement). The two kinds of pure [priests] are Buddhist monks and Brahmins. To summarize their significance, they [tend to] have a haughty outlook since they believe they become disentangled from the psychological mechanisms (*skandhas*) that are under the compulsion of the all-basis consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) through [external] pure practices and cleanliness. They also think that keeping the supremacy of discipline and asceticism will make them pure and disentangled. Surrounding country means the mental sphere ("country") and the six sense organs. Their audiences are the forms and so forth of the external world. The one who thoroughly purifies the foregoing things becomes pure.

We should likewise consider the following quote,

Who knows the absence of essence as the essence,
who abides always in perversity,
who has more emotional affliction than the emotionally afflicted,
will attain true Awakening.

This means knowing the absence of distracting thoughts to be the essence. [The second line] means to keep the right priorities in mind for the perversities that stem from a lack of right priorities. [The third line] tells how the emotional afflictions stemming from the hardships of religious practices lead to attaining Awakening.

These are the ways to internalize the exact significances of the teachings which were expressed in flexibly intentional statements without making mistakes.[54]

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53. For the source of this quote, not indicated in the passage, see the scriptural anthology *UDĀNAVARGA*, chapter 29 (Yugavarga), verse 24. It is all the more shocking that this verse is in the *Dhammapada*, which Buddhist modernists have championed as a core "gospel" of Buddha's purely rational moral teachings. The context supports Sog-bzlog-pa's interpretation which follows. Where Sog-bzlog-pa's citation reads:
pha dang ma ni bsad-bya-zhing //
rgyal-po gtsang-spra-can gnyis dang //
yul 'khor 'khor dang bcas bcom na //
mi de dag-par 'gyur zhes bya //
The original text reads,
pha dang ma ni bsad-byas-shing //
rgyal-po gtsang-spra-can gnyis dang //
yul 'khor 'khor dang bcas bcom-na //
mi ni dag-par 'gyur zhes bya //
Compare also *UDĀNAVARGA*, chapter 33 (Brāhmaṇavarga), verse 72. One of the general points of the verse in its later context is that the external purificatory practices (etc.) of brahmin priests are ineffectual. To be a "true" brahmin, one must get to the mental roots of suffering. It is interesting that SPARHAM, *Tibetan Dhammapada*, p. 217, note 244, gives (on the basis of his Tibetan informants) explanations very similar to those of Sog-bzlog-pa.
54. For those who might wish to do more research on Tibetan understandings in this field, the most extensive coverage of this same material is by 'BA'-RA-BA, *Bka'-'bum*, vol. 5. The dates of 'Ba'-ra-ba Rgyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po are 1310 to 1391.

By way of conclusion

Introducing an early seventeenth-century Tibetan discussion as evidence for the eleventh and twelfth centuries (when the New Schools were becoming "naturalized" in Tibet), let alone the Indian scene in earlier centuries, provokes many questions, but a very thorough study indeed would be required to trace the entire history of Buddhist scriptural rhetoric studies. It is not even possible here to adequately address the narrower objective of tracing Tibetan understandings in this field. I would only like to point out that many of the sūtras, tantras and commentaries cited by Sog-bzlog-pa would have been available to eleventh century Tibetan readers and some as early as the eighth century. He does supply reference to a lost discussion of the subject by Rin-chen-bzang-po from the late tenth or early eleventh century.

Although it is not possible to make a watertight historical argument at this point, we may still use Sog-bzlog-pa to advance an alternative view of Buddhist tantra to the usual ones, a supportable hypothesis, if you will. One common view is that Buddhist tantra arose as a popular, a-Buddhistic antinomian movement of the Indian under-classes (Dravidian substrata, and the like).[55] Others think that there was a tantric movement instigated by a radical non-Buddhist elite (meaning the Mahāsiddhas)[56] which somehow and for some reason was co-opted by Buddhists to form the Buddhist tantras. I would not deny all truth to these scenarios. I wish instead to present another possibility that, while not necessarily any more historically provable than the usual one, needs to be considered just because it could broaden the horizons of scholars working on the problems of tantra origins, not that it is my true purpose to uncover origins *per se*.

I shall attempt to state the alternative as simply as possible. The stories of Mahāsiddhas in Buddhist tantric literature are not to be taken as historical fact (although the figures about whom these stories are told may have been historical, this being beside the point at this point). They are above all stories, subject to the same sorts of rhetorical analyses discussed by Sog-bzlog-pa. Their highly symbolic and stylized "biographies" are meant to point toward Buddhist truths. Thus, when one encounters the Mahāsiddha Pig-pen (Phag-tshang-pa) with a club over one shoulder and a woman under the opposite arm leading a herd of pigs, one will know that these symbolize his transformation of the three poisons of aggression, lust and ignorance (respectively). By doubting the evidence of the Mahāsiddha stories, the architecture of the common view begins to loosen at the base. This might then lead us to look for factors within Buddhism itself that would account for the production of the entire range of tantric literature of which the Mahāsiddha stories are only a small part. What I propose is, in brief, a re-etymology of Vajrayāna.

I repeat that I do not pretend to sufficient historical evidence for the following view. What I appear to be doing is taking an insight from late scriptural rhetoric study and applying it back onto history - a dubious procedure, but perhaps the results would prove worthy of testing.

The alternative I suggest is as follows. Mahāyāna scriptural-hermeneutical thinking reached a level at some point (the fourth century CE?) at which the idea was widely accepted in those circles that the Buddha employed several distinct levels of discourse. This sort of multi-leveled rhetorical analysis, after becoming sufficiently commonplace in Mahāyāna thought, began to have consequences for the literary forms that the subsequent revelations of Buddhist truth (scriptures) took upon themselves. Not just the literary forms, we must add, but the liturgical, artistic and even meditational forms as well. These forms are the forms that would be called, in their entirety, Vajrayāna, and moreover, they were found to be effective, even much more effective, in promoting Buddhist truths.

This alternative view implies a simple reversal of priorities. When Snellgrove[57] says, "... for while the *tantra* itself was intended to be understood in its obvious (and be it added in its often reprehensible) sense,

55. These sorts of theories are especially common among recent Indian scholars, who trace a few tantric elements back to the Vedas, but credit "Dravidian backlash" with the main impetus for the "tantric movement." See CHATTOPADHYAYA, *Reflections*, as an example.

56. See SNELLGROVE, in the introduction to his edition of the *Hevajra Tantra* (vol. 1, p. 12 *et passim*) where he emphasizes the "elitist" nature of the movement, denying it was "popular" in the sense of a broad-based phenomenon, saying rather that it was a radical movement.

57. SNELLGROVE, in his introduction to *Hevajra Tantra* (vol. 1, p. 17).

the leaders of this new period persist in regarding it in a figurative sense," we *should* require from him a demonstration that the interpretive strategies of those he calls "leaders of this new period" did *not* exist in the time of "the *tantra* itself." In case we do not require this of him, we would seem to be tacitly agreeing to an assumption because it is consonant with our own (and, be it added, perhaps reprehensible) interests. That those interpretive strategies did exist in the fourth century is indicated by Sog-bzlog-pa's citation of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, a reputedly fourth-century text.[58] Assuming, as many scholarly critics now accept, that tantric developments (*properly* speaking) came later, we begin to make a case for our view.

> It clearly only becomes possible to understand these texts thoroughly by accepting their *weltanschauung* complete, and this is probably an impossibility for a modern European. To think that one has done so is not sufficient.[59]

These are highly provocative words with retroactive implications for Snellgrove's own historical scheme of tantric origins as well as the alternative one presented here (and there would seem to be implied here an ethnographical assumption that those who are born in a Buddhist tantric environment will as a matter of course be able to understand tantra, an idea Tibetan teachers generally find ludicrous). These words, which basically boil down to "Don't try it; it won't work," would place us in the situation of being incapable of understanding the significance of things in another culture by virtue of our grounding in our own. Our interpretive strategies would not work for them. Do we then need to remain entirely thwarted in our efforts to interpret tantras? Our logical alternative to total bafflement would clearly lie in a study of the interpretive strategies employed within the tradition we want to understand. What seems to be implied in Snellgrove's statements, taken together, is that tantra was, in origin, something thoroughly comprehensible to us because it was intended to mean word-for-word what it said, but became utterly confounding for "modern European" minds only by the subsequent application of hermeneutical whitewash (which is the medium through which the Tibet-born person "naturally" understands it, and which make it impossible for anyone else to understand). The simple became complex, and the evolutionist assumptions implicit in the "historical method" are served.

What my alternative model of historical development implies is that the interpretive complexity of tantra texts is rooted in a prior interpretive complexity in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Vajrayāna was never "simple" because Mahāyāna was never "simple" but rather possessed a sophisticated hermeneutic. With this sort of understanding, Vajrayāna becomes an intelligible part of the Buddhist mainstream. Why should this idea come as a shock to "a [post-] modern European"?

The common views of Vajrayāna in India help to sustain a common view about its transmission and development in Tibet, and make the preceding considerations important to further germane arguments. The common view (which Snellgrove shares with a number of philologically-oriented scholars), that the tantras were initiated in India with literal intentions and only later had interpretive schemes applied to them, has its corollary in the common view that the Old Tibetan Tantras translated in late imperial times were equally literally interpreted and practiced up until the Later Spread or beyond. In light of the alternative view, these assumptions also require re-evaluation. There were doubts, voiced in writing by the Western Tibetan King Zhi-ba-'od (late 11th century) and later critics, as to the authenticity of the Old Tantra scriptures (meaning their genuine origins in India, although this leads to other questions which beg further considered, such as how Buddhist were Buddhist scriptures in India?). But it is important to note that "authenticity" of tantras is quite a different matter from their correct interpretation or correct implementation. As Sog-bzlog-pa repeatedly points out, the problem of interpretation applies equally to all Tantras, "Old" or "New", all of them being subject to misapprehension and misapplication. Tenth-century bands of supposedly pious terrorists (such as the infamous Ar-tsho Bande), if they were indeed such, were rightly censured by the

58. We also know of a work by Ye-shes-sde, one of the most prolific of the eighth-century Tibetan translators, on the subject of the flexibly-intentional statements. This work, entitled *Dgongs Ldem Dgongs Bzhi'i Brjed-byang*, is listed in DPA'-BO, *Mkhas-pa'i Dga'-ston* (1986), vol. 1, p. 402.

59. SNELLGROVE, in his introduction to *Hevajra Tantra* (vol. 1, pp. 33-34, n. 3).

Tibetan tradition, but there is no reason even to entertain implications that the Old Tibetan Vajrayāna teachers were of the same sort. There seem no good reasons, other than reasons of polemic or hermeneutical naiveté, to think they were murderous profligates. The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* with its levels of interpretation was translated by the late eighth century or so, and the levels of interpretation are discussed in the early ninth-century *Sgra-sbyor Bam-po Gnyis-pa*, and in a more or less contemporary work by the Tibetan translator Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs.[60] These textual facts argue against hermeneutical *naiveté*. Of course, these arguments would require much more extensive documentation to be considered entirely secure, but we can learn to live with degrees of insecurity.

Still, the alternative view is consonant with what we understand about the early Indian tantras and the Old Translation tantras. In order to continue to follow the common view, we should be forced to demonstrate hermeneutical *naiveté* in the earliest of these tantras. It is entirely possible to point out the use of interpretive cues, for example, in the Old Translation *Guhyagarbha Tantra* and its Old Tibetan commentaries, where they make their appearance in the very beginning in terms of the Five Unities (Phun-tshogs Lnga). In order to rightly determine the realm of discourse, we must know the form of the Teacher (Nirmāṇakāya? Sambhogakāya?) and how this correlates with the character of the Questioner and Audience (*devas*, *rakṣasas*, *bodhisattvas*, humans? The Buddha talking to Himself or to someone emanated from Himself?), the Time, and the Place (the objective realm corresponding to "subjective" states of the Teacher). By understanding the context of the discourse, we should be enabled to ascertain the nature and manner of its content. This quite conscious interpretive nexus has close interrelations with, and consequences for, Buddhist thought, symbolism and art, a theme I have touched on elsewhere.[61]

One interrelationship is with the [non-]duality which manifests in the polarity symbolism of the Buddha's insight (*prajñā*) and means (*upāya*). If the Buddha adjusts His presentation of Buddhist truths, it is because He understands the differing capacities of sentient beings to accommodate that truth (insight) and He equally well understands the most effective ways to wean them away from their limitations (including those in the realm of the ethical) so that they may be more directly confronted with Buddhist truth (means). Those nurtured on Judaeo-Christian scriptural hermeneutics may find all this rather difficult to comprehend, but they would do well to wean themselves of the expectation that Buddhist scriptures should "mean" the same way as their own. Otherwise we go back to "square one" and rest content with incomprehensibility. I think that would be going too far. Surely if Buddha could find the right method to get through to serial killers like Aṅgulimāla, He could find it in His heart to get through, in one way or another, to us.

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60. The *Sūtrālaṃkāra* is listed, along with two commentaries, in the *Ldan-dkar-ma* catalog. For the levels of interpretation, see ANGDU, *Tibeto-Sanskrit*, pt. 1, pp. 110-112. A reference to the "elasticity" (*ldem-po*) of tantric expressions is also found in the often-cited opening pages of the *Sgra-sbyor Bam-po Gnyis-pa* (see SNELLGROVE, *Indo-Tibetan*, vol. 2, p. 443). For the work by Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs, see RIKEY, *Manual*, pp. 91-93.

61. MARTIN, "Illusion Web."

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THE *RMAD DU BYUNG BA* IN ITS THREE VERSIONS

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Gene Smith has been seminal in the preservation and distribution of Tibetan literature whose continued existence was negatively affected by the political development that occurred in Tibet during the middle of the 20th century. Without his efforts and dedication to the task of preserving a rich and to the modern world mainly unknown literature, our opportunity to learn about the diverse literary culture of Tibet would be diminished for ever. My humble contribution to celebrate his monumental accomplishment addresses an issue directly related to Gene Smith's own efforts, that is, the transmission of texts through the course of history.

The almost forensic work of Helmut Eimer, who devoted his career to detect the often mangled and always intricate development and mutual dependency of the various editions of the Tibetan canon, as well as the work of David Germano and his colleagues at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, and that of many other colleagues have shed light on this issue. Their painstaking research revealed that the transmission of authoritative Tibetan texts was a creative process that responded to the needs, interests and pressures of different cultural and religious epochs. By no means remained the texts unaltered when they were incorporated in larger collections of texts, or when new editions in the form of manuscripts or xylographs were planned. To uncover this process, individual texts need to be put under the scholarly microscope. Eventually, with enough individual texts analyzed in this way, a more coherent picture will evolve – as it has been the case with the Canon.

The present contribution was made possible through research funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, for whose support I am deeply grateful. The research focused on identifying layers of editorship in the *sems sde* section of the *rDzogs chen* texts. This particular tradition began to take shape in Tibet during the 8th century C.E. Philosophically its teachings exhibit some similarities with certain strands of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism.[1] Details of historical influences are debated among scholars.[2] Today these texts are found in the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, the Hundred Thousand Tantras of the Old Tradition and only few of them were incorporated in the Tibetan Tripiṭaka, while most remained excluded.[3] The indigenous tradition claims that this body of Tibetan texts goes back to the 8th century C.E. and constitutes, at least in parts, translations of Indic texts. While the claim of an Indian origin of these texts must remain an unsubstantiated indigenous assumption, the claim of its existence during the 8th century could be substantiated at least with regard to a few texts,[4] while the age of the majority of texts remains unknown to us. The present inquiry is not so much concerned with the indigenous claim of the texts' antiquity or even their claim to be translations of Indic texts but rather with bringing some light into the editorial process these texts were subjected to.

1. Traditional Tibetan scholarship denies this (see Tulku Thondup, *The Practice of Dzogchen*, ed. by Harold Talbott, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1989; 2nd ed. 1996, pp. 112-122). A thorough analysis and comparison of the original sources rather than of the writings of later Tibetan masters is still a *desideratum*.
2. Philip Yampolsky, "New Japanese Studies in Early Ch'an History," in Whalen Lai / Lewis R. Lancaster (eds.), *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*. Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983, pp. 1-11; Dashun Ueyama, "The Study of Tibetan Ch'an Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects," in Whalen Lai / Lewis R. Lancaster, 1983, pp. 327-349; Karmay Samten, *The Great Perfection (Rdzogs Chen). A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988, p. 257, plates.
3. A detailed discussion of the textual situation is found in E. K. Neumaier-Dargyay, *The Sovereign All-Creating Mind, the Motherly Buddha. A translation of the Kun byed rgyal po'i mdo*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992, pp. 17-26.
4. Daishun Ueyama (1983) 340-44; Samten G. Karmay, 1988, pp. 41-85.

The *rMad du byung ba* and its Place in Tibetan Literature

The subject of the present analysis are the three versions of the *rMad du byung ba*, all incorporated in the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*.[5] These three versions as well as some other *sems sde* texts present themselves in the form of Māhayāna sūtras whereby the Buddha is in dialogue with an interlocutor while other texts present thoughts on meditation and enlightenment without identifying either an author or an addressee. The authenticity of these *rDzogs chen* texts has been questioned by Tibetan thinkers of the past and they remain subject to some doubts. The present state of these texts is certainly indicative of a complex and convoluted editorial process of which we know almost nothing. The Tibetan historiographic notes preserved in several ancient works are more concerned with establishing and verifying lineages of transmission rather than recording editorial manipulations of these texts. For this reason, it is the objective of this contribution to analyze the three versions of the *rMad du byung ba* in order to obtain some insight regarding their interdependence. The *rMad du byung ba* is one of the medium length texts and is sometimes counted among the eighteen *sems sde* texts.[6] However, the Tibetan tradition seems to have hardly recognized its existence. Samten Karmay, for instance, only lists it among the other *sems sde* texts without discussing it any further,[7] while Tulku Thondup lists the *rMad byung* among "three other major tantras," a group that is added, like an appendix, to the "Thirteen later translated tantras."[8] Whether the *rMad du byung ba* is a part of the thirteen later translated texts is disputed as we shall see. The thirteen later translated tantras are called so because they were, according to the Tibetan tradition, translated by Vimalamitra after Vairocana had returned from his exile in Tsha-ba-rong (in East Tibet).[9] Only the *Vairo'i 'dra 'bag* includes *the rMad du byung ba* among the eighteen *sems sde* texts while neither the *Nyang ral chos 'byung*[10] nor Klong-chen-pa in his *Chos dbying mdzod kyi 'grel pa*[11] and *Grub mtha' mdzod*[12] include it therein. However, Klong-chen-pa listed the *rMad du byung ba* among a group of twenty-one *sems sde* texts and we may assume that for that reason Tulku Thondup included the text among an additional list of *sems sde* texts.[13] dPa'-bo gtsug-lag phreng-ba, on the other hand, includes the *rMad du byung ba* in the group of eighteen *sems sde* texts but as the last one and as a category all by itself.[14] There he says the *rMad du byung ba* was taught to "annihilate those who break the tantric discipline." Yet, the *rMad du byung ba* is included in the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* (the Hundred Thousand Old Tantras) with three different versions.[15] This situation could be interpreted as indicating that the *rMad du byung ba* was until fairly late time, i.e. that of dPa'-bo gtsug-lag phreng-ba (1503-1565), not considered as an integral component of the eighteen *sems sde* texts. Rather, it was seen as a related text, but obviously of lesser authenticity than the others. However, the fact that gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes includes quotes from the *rMad du byung ba* in his *bSamg gtan mig sgron* (assumed to date not later than

5. *rNying ma rgyud 'bum, Tantras of the Nyingmapa Tradition*, ed. by Jamyang Khyentse, Bhutan, 1974; MB 1: vol. II, pp. 1-68; MB 2: vol. II, pp. 567-624; MB 3: vol. III, pp. 1-33.
6. Samten Karmay discusses these eighteen texts at some detail (1988, pp. 23-24, 207-08).
7. Samten Karmay, 1988, lists the text on p. 24, but does not mention it when he discusses the *sems sde* literature on p. 207 f.
8. Tulku Thondup, *The Origin of Buddhism in Tibet. The Tantric Tradition of the Nyingmapa*. Marion, MA: Buddhayana, 1984, p. 27.
9. Karmay, 1988, p. 23.
10. R. O. Meisezahl (ed.), *Die grosse Geschichte des tibetischen Buddhismus nach alter Tradition rNying ma' chos 'byung chen mo* (Nyang ral chos 'byung). Sant Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 1985, table 233, 1, 2 f.
11. Gangtok 1964, fol. 206b.
12. Gangtok 1969, p. 357 f.
13. *Chos dbying mdzod kyi grel pa*, fol. 206b, 6 ff., and *Grub mtha' mdzod*, p. 357 f.
14. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, ed. by Lokesh Chandra. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1959, pt. 1, 221, 20 ff.
15. See note 5.

from the 10th century) can easily be construed as a counter-argument.[16] Thus, the situation is ambiguous. On the one hand its being part of the eighteen *sems sde* texts is at least not very well substantiated while, on the other hand, there is strong evidence that it was considered as an important *sems sde* text because being quoted by gNubs-chen and being three times translated by different editorial teams.

The textual body of the *rMad du byung ba* in its three versions

I have chosen the *rMad du byung ba* for this study, not because of its content or its position within the organization of the *rDzogs chen* literature but because of its textual preservation: the text exists in three versions that differ substantially from one another, and quotes are found in a 10th century authoritative source. It seemed that the *rMad du byung ba* was a good candidate for a literary investigation and textual analysis (assisted by a computer based stylistic analysis) for addressing some of the text-historical problems of the *rDzogs chen* literature.

Version 1 of the *rMad du byung ba* (MB 1) is preserved in 42 chapters in the second volume of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*; its colophon states that "the Indian master Śrīsiṃha and the Tibetan translator Vairocana had translated" it. MB 2, contained in the same volume, consists of only 40 chapters. Its colophon states "the Indian master Vimalamitra and the translator gNyags Jñānakumāra translated and approved [the translated text]. Śrīsiṃha and Vairocana had also previously translated [this text], and Jñānakumāra's and gYu-sgra's translation also exists." MB 3 contains only 11 chapters with no colophon attached to it. However, the editor and compiler of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* edition I am using, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, states in the list of texts contained in each volume, which he provides at the start of the first volume, that the third version was translated by Śrīsiṃha and Vairocana.[17]

Without doubt the colophon of MB 2, if authentic, indicates that three versions of this text had existed from an early time on. One, and perhaps the oldest, translated by Śrīsiṃha[18] and Vairocana,[19] a second translation (and we may assume that the indigenous tradition views this as an improved one) by Vimalamitra and gNyags Jñānakumāra,[20] and a third one by Jñānagarbha[21] and gYu-sgra.[22] To make this situation even more confusing, 'Jigs-med gling-pa (1729-1798), who re-edited the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* previously compiled by Ratna-gling-pa, lists in his *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* catalogue three versions of the *rMad du*

16. The dating of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes and his *bSam gtan mig sgron* is problematic, as S. Karmay has demonstrated (1988, pp. 99-102). After examination of all the recorded evidence he comes to the conclusion that the *bSam gtan mig sgron* must have been composed after 842 and before the end of the 10th century.
17. *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, ed. by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, 1974, vol. 1, p. 4, line 3.
18. Śrīsiṃha and Vimalamitra, as well as other names, occur in the *rNying ma* literature as historical persons who were instrumental in disseminating the *rDzogs chen* teachings (Eva Dargyay, *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977, pp. 21-27). But until now they could not be verified in Dunhuang or other contemporary sources. Till this happens, their historical existence remains somewhat dubious.
19. Vairocana as a contemporary of Padmasambahva is documented in a Dunhuang text (PT 44), as explained by Karmay, 1988, p. 34, and Pasang Wangdu / Diemberger (eds.), *dBa' bzhed. The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet.* Vienna: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000, p. 70 n. 238.
20. In the *'Dra 'bag*, he is mentioned as contemporary with gYu-sgra and as teacher of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgya ye-shes, author of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, (Karmay, 1988, pp. 29, 69, 207).
21. The *Deb ther sngon po* (N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976, pp. 400, 417) mentions a Jñānagarbha (alias Ye-shes snying-po) in connection with Mar-pa (1012-1096). It is unlikely that this is the same person as the one mentioned in the colophon of MB 2 unless one dismisses the reference as fiction. However, Bu-ston mentions a Ye-shes snying-po as being represented in a mural at bSam-yas together with other major and well-documented figures of the late 8th century (Janos Szerb, *Bu ston's History of Buddhism in Tibet.* Vienna: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990, p. 30.
22. Pasang Wangdu / Diemberger, 2000, p. 96 n. 377, identifies gYu-sgra snying-po as a native of Tsha ba rong and disciple of Vairocana; see also Karmay, 1988, pp. 27-29, where he recounts gYu-sgra becoming Vairocana's disciple.

byung ba contained in the first volume (*Ka*).[23] However, there is further discrepancy with the Dilgo Khyentse edition of the *rMad du byung ba* in so far as 'Jigs-med gling-pa's first version (*Byang chub gyi sems rnam du byung ba*) has only two chapters and is said to have been translated by Śrīsiṃha and Vairocana, his second version (*Byang chub kyi sems rnam du byung ba* or *Chos chen po rmad du byung ba*) is listed as having 20 chapters (no translators mentioned), and his third version, with the same title, as having 11 chapters. In a note, 'Jigs-med gling-pa says that there are 53 *phyi ma ta ma* (?) and two later books (*bu*).[24] None of 'Jigs-med gling-pa's versions of the *rMad du byung ba* seem to correspond with the present Dilgo Khyentse edition. Obviously, 'Jigs-med gling-pa's editions of these texts had been further edited and altered before they were printed by Dilgo Khyentse. Unfortunately, I am not aware whether the 'Jigs-med gling-pa edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* is extant. Thus, I turn to the present Khyentse edition to analyze the three versions to see how they relate to one another.

MB 1 and MB 2 render a text that is largely identical, although the organization by chapters is different. For instance, chapter 24 of MB 1 was split into chapters 24 and 25 in MB 2, while chapters 30 and 39 of MB 1 do not correspond to those chapters in MB 2. Furthermore, MB 2 lacks chapters 2 to 7, while chapters 25 and 42 of MB 2 do not correspond with the respective chapters of MB 1. The textual correspondence, disregarding the above mentioned discrepancies, between MB 1 and MB 2 is baffling is so far as both versions are said to be the product of different translation teams (MB 1 by Śrīsiṃha and Vairocana; MB 2 by Vimalamitra and gNyags Jñānakumāra). The textual similarity of these two versions warrants further analysis and, eventually awaits some explanation. MB 3, a much shorter text than the other two versions, contains a largely different text, as expected from a different translation team. Thus, the question arises whether MB 1 and MB 2 in the Khyentse edition are truly two different versions or whether one is a re-edited version of the other. If this question would be answered in an affirmative way, then, we have to conclude that one of the three versions mentioned by Jigs-med gling-pa was either lost by the time Khyentse put together his edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* or he excluded it from his collection for whatever reasons.

Despite of this incongruence, the antiquity of some of the textual material now contained in these three versions is to some degree substantiated by numerous quotations found in gNubs-chen's *bSam gtan mig sgron*, which not only dates from the 10th century, but which is also, beside the Dunhuang documents and the recently discovered *dBa' bzhed* (Pasang Wangdu / H. Diemberger 2000), the earliest account of the religious developments during the imperial period of Tibet. That it remained largely unrecognized by the Tibetan scholastic tradition, may suggest that the text has undergone little modification since its composition in the 10th century.[25] The *gSam gtan mig sgron* contains numerous quotations from various *rDzogs chen* texts. The correspondence of these quotations found in the 10th century work with the present *rDzogs chen* texts was the topic of a previous study.[26] Quotations from the *rMad du byung ba* found in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* correspond only to passages from MB 2. Does this mean that version 1 and 3 are the product of some later times? Perhaps. It could also indicate that gNubs-chen had only access to MB 2 while MB1 and 3 were in circulation at his time but at different locations.

Computer-assisted Analysis of the *rMad du byung ba*

Left with this unsatisfying situation that does not allow us to explain the murky situation of these three versions, one may turn to a different approach of textual analysis. Any analysis of text hopes to detect something the text in itself does not reveal, at least not at the surface. If anonymous texts are analyzed for the sake of detecting plausible editorial origins then there is the implicit assumption made that different

23. Christopher Wilkinson, University of Calgary, was so kind to provide me with the reference to 'Jigs-med gling-pa's catalogue, for which I am very grateful. As to the edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* by 'Jigs-med gling-pa, see Dargyay, 1977, pp. 70, 189.

24. I take *bu* as an abbreviation of *bu dpe*.

25. Karmay, 1988, pp. 102.

26. E. Neumaier, "The *bSam gtan mig sgron* and its rDzogs chen Quotations: a study in the production of Tibetan texts," *Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Bloomington, 1998.

people write in a different styles. Thus the style becomes a trace element, which leads the scholar to the so far hidden writer – like in a good detective story. The studies by A.Q. Morton, A.J.P. Kenny, and Y.T. Radday[27] have shown that the criteria for tracing layers of different editorships are not the overt characteristics of a text in terms of its thematic content, but its inconspicuous stylistic and grammatical elements. For instance, a computer-assisted analysis of the ethics of Aristotle focused not on the characteristic terminology but on inconspicuous grammatical elements. The underlying assumption is that if someone wants to alter the text, for whatever reasons, this person or persons will pay attention to the characteristic vocabulary and terminology, but not to inconspicuous words whose only function is to give grammatical structuring. Tibetan lends itself well to this kind of analysis because of the grammatical structure of the Tibetan language – which uses particles to denote cases and function, also like prepositions and conjunctions. These particles are independent words and can for this reason be easily isolated.

In each case the selected words are studied in terms of their exact occurrence within the text as a whole and within each chapter of each version, their frequency distribution in terms of actual occurrence, and expected one. In a last step, the difference between actual percentage and expected percentage is given. The expected percentage gives the figure to be expected if the word would be evenly distributed throughout the text. The highest or lowest differences in percentage mark those chapters, which give rise to suspicion. Then, we may infer that these chapters show, for whatever reasons, a different grammatical make-up than the rest of these texts and thus require further examination. If the sections of a text that are thus marked as deviant exhibit also difference in terms of its preference for certain technical terms, and if these findings are corroborated by a preference of themes, then one may propose the assumption that such a section had an origin different from the rest of the text. That is, the deviating sections of the text have to be set in contrast to its rest, whether it be in terms of stylistic idiosyncrasy or terminology. The implication then would be that the themes covered in such a section might not be indigenous to the rest of the material.

A careful analysis of the findings has to strive for establishing a correlation between stylistic and terminological differences and similarities. Such procedure uses the stylistic difference as a lead towards identifying the insertion of terms, which are alien to the rest of the text. Such analyses carried out on different levels and by using different marking elements have a compounding effect on our pursuit to come to a better understanding of the development of Buddhist thought through the ages.

For the purpose of this contribution, several grammatical particles were identified as leading trace markers: the two different forms of the genitive particle: *ba'i* vs. *yi*; the negating particle *med*; the isolating particle *ni*. The stylistic analysis is juxtaposed with a terminological one, whereby certain terms fundamental to the 18 *sems sde* texts were selected.

For a terminological analysis of these texts the terms *nam mkha'* (heavens, sky), *rnal ma* (stillness, balance), and *sems* (mind) were selected because of the frequency with which they occur in the main *sems sde* texts. Further the usage of the terms *rtog* (to understand, to discriminate or differentiate) vs. the term *rtogs* (to understand intuitively) were examined. It is to be expected that the analysis of these two different kinds of words will produce different results. The distribution of the grammatical particles will be indicative of a stratigraphy of editorship while the distribution of significant terms will indicate the forger's attempt to have the passage pass as "authentic."

Analysis of MB1 (42 chapters):

The chapters 20 and 36 of MB 1 seem to be marginalized in some way. In chapter 20 the negating particle *med* occurs 4% less than what would be expected if the distribution of this particle would be evenly spread throughout the entire text. The same is true with regard to the genitive particle *ba'i*, with the noted difference that the percentage is only 2%; while the same text has a 7% higher than expected occurrence of the isolating particle *ni*. In contrast to these findings, chapter 36 is by 5% deficient in the expected occurrence of the particle *ni*, and by 2% of the expected occurrence of the genitive particle *ba'i*.

27. Susan Hockey, *A Guide to Computer Applications in the Humanities*. London: Duckworth, 1980, pp. 136-141.

An analysis based on the terminology reveals that chapter 9 exhibits a 15% above average occurrence of the term *nam mkha'*, while chapter 20 is deficient by 7% of this term. Chapter 7 exceeds every other chapter by 4% in the expected occurrence of the term *sems* (which is found a total of 342 times in the text). However, *sems* is in the entire MB 1 never associated with the terms *kun byed*, or *gzhi*, which do not occur in the entire text. The following chapter 8 lacks this term by 3% if even distribution is to be expected. The term *rtogs* (discriminatory faculty of the human mind) occurs in the entire text 23 times; while its homophonic sibling *rtog* (intuitive and non-reifying insight) occurs only 3 times. This fact by itself is unusual as *rDzogs chen* texts in general emphasis the non-reifying nature of mind over its discursive and reifying abilities. Chapter 11 is deficient in the expected occurrence of *rtogs* by 7% while chapter 36 exceeds this expectation by 17%. Because the term *rtog* occurs only three times throughout the text, chaps 5, 8, and 35 exceed in the occurrence of *rtog* by 32-29 %; while the chapters 2 and 36 are deficient by 5%. However, the infrequent occurrence of this term does not warrant any conclusion to be drawn from this. The term *sems* is by 4% over represented in chapter 7, and underrepresented by 3% in chapter 6.

particle	chapters with above average occurrence	chapter with below average occurrence
ba'i	16	4/11/20/36
yi	1	11
ba	2	36/42
med	22	20
ni	20	36
terms		
rnal ma	n/a	n/a
rtog	5/35	2/36
rtogs	36	11
sems	7	8
kun byed	n/a	n/a
gzhi	n/a	n/a
nam mkha'	9	20

The content of chapter 20 differs from other *rDzogs chen* texts. In summary, it says that the five psycho-physical aggregates (*skandha*) are transformed into the 5 *tathāgatas* who constitute five different mandalas. In the final part it is said that all sentient beings have the nature of these mandalas. This line of thought is fairly common in the general tantric literature, but it is unusual in early *rDzogs chen* texts, which usually reject such ideas. In other words, the unusual stylistic and terminological appearance of this chapter is corroborated by its content.

Findings for MB 2 (40 chapters)

The highest occurrence of difference between the expected average percentage and the actual found one, with regard to the individual particles, is found in chapters 20 and 36, while the highest occurrence of difference percentage is found in chapters 11 and 20, when we base our investigation on technical terms. If we combine both findings it is chapter 20 that stands out as unusual in terms of its use of grammatical particles and in terms of its use of general *rDzogs chen* terminology.

particle	chapters with above average occurrence	chapter with below average occurrence
ba'i	16	2/20/36
yi	1	11
ba	11	36
med	22	20
ni	20	36
terms		
rnal ma	23	11/20
rtog	8	11/20
rtogs	36	11
sems	14	8
kun byed	13	20
gzhi	37	20
nam mkha'	26	11/20

Analysis of MB 3 (11 chapters)

In the case of MB 3, chapter 1 is the most deviant one. But no accord could be found between the terminological deviance and the grammatical one.

particle	chapters with above average occurrence	chapter with below average occurrence
ba'i	11	4
yi	5	1
ba	10	9
med	3	1
ni	1	6
terms		
rnal ma	n/a	n/a
rtog	n/a	n/a
rtogs	2	8
sems	2/8	6
kun byed	n/a	n/a
gzhi	n/a	n/a
nam mkha'	n/a	n/a

Comparison of the three versions

From the results of this analysis, it becomes evident that chapter 20 of MB 1 as well as of MB 2 is deviant in terms of the use of grammatical particles and its terminology. Chapter 36 is deviant in MB 1 only. While in MB 3 chapter 1 stands out.

With the exception of MB 2, the *rMad du byung ba* lacks almost completely the terminology typical of early *rDzogs chen* texts, such as, *kun byed*, *gzhi*, and *nam mkha'*. Therefore, one may use a term that does rarely occur in early *rDzogs chen* text, i.e. *dkyil 'khor* (Skr. *maṇḍala*). If one examines the occurrence of this term, then, chapter 2 of MB 1 has 11 occurrences, while the same chapter of MB 2 lists the term only 7 times. Chapter 20 however contains this term most frequently: 23 times in MB 1 and 21 times in MB 2. MB 3, however, has the highest occurrence of this term in chapter 1. In other words, the occurrence of the term *dkyil 'khor* is correlated with a deviatal use of grammatical particles throughout the three versions of this text. It seems that even an initial analysis by the frequency of grammatical particles *versus* certain technical terms can be used to identify passages of text that belong to a different layer. In other words, in a thematic examination of the *rMad du byung ba* the chapter 20 in MB 1 and MB 2, and chapter 1 of MB 3 have to be studied independently of the rest of the text.

If we would use technical terms as the only criteria then we would certainly spot the "new" theme in chapter 20, but we would be unable to say that it originated from another editorial context than the rest of the text. In the light of the high deviating percentage (MB1: -4%: *med*; +7%: *ni*; MB2: -3% *ba'i*; -5% *med*; +9% *ni*) of common case particles and function words however, we can make such a claim.

Chapter 36, which made itself noticeable, contains only 2 references to *dkyil 'khor* in MB 1 and MB 2.

Using the Standardized Score (z-score)

The so-called z-score is a statistical measure that allows a comparison of the frequencies across the range of different texts. The z-score is the result of the following mathematical procedure: actual frequency minus average frequency, divided by the standard deviation of frequencies. The z-score is considered a finer tool to trace differences in style than the mere frequency distribution because it takes into account a larger amount of variances.

The following table gives the z-score for the five selected particles in the three versions of the text:

particles	MB 1	MB 2	MB 3
ba'i	3.90	3.58	2.72
yi	-0.05	0.13	-0.23
ba	8.06	8.27	4.24
med	5.07	4.72	6.37
ni	4.18	3.67	2.03

From these data it is clear that MB1 is much closer to MB2 than MB3 is to any one of them. This could support a hypothesis that MB3 originated from another editorial context than MB1 and MB2 have.

Conclusion

If the findings of this computer-assisted analysis are contrasted with those of the above carried out literary analysis, it is evident that for several reasons MB 1 and MB 2 are closely connected although not identical. Such reasons comprise stylistic and terminological as well as textual similarities as discussed above. The fact that only passages from MB 2 are quoted by gNubs-chen in his *bSam gtan mig sgron* suggests that MB 2 predates MB 1 and that MB 1 constitutes a partial revision of MB 2. Does such revision qualify for the work of a Tibetan translator (*lo tsa ba*)? If not, then the assertion made in the colophon of MB 2 in the Khyentse edition, i.e. that there was a translation of the *rMad du byung ba* attributed to Śrīsiṃha and Vairocana prior to the one by by Vimalamitra and gNyags Jñānakumāra, may be called into question. As the historicity of Śrīsiṃha and Vimalamitra remains undocumented, no further assumptions can be made. The translation of MB 3 attributed to Jñānagarbha and gYu-sgra seems to be a separate text that happens to be transmitted under the same title.

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OF BONE AND FLESH

Michael Oppitz

When I met Gene Smith for the first time in his hospitable home at Golf Links, New Delhi, in 1976, his comment on hearing my name was brief: "Ah, the *ruyi*." I was surprised to meet an American in India who knew about a recently discovered text on Sherpa clan history, translated and commented upon in German. As this *Report on the Bones* (*rus yig*)[1] marked not only my own entry into Himalayan ethnography but also a point of common interest with Gene, I have chosen a topic for his Festschrift that has direct links with this text: the concept of "bone and flesh" in Himalayan societies.

My contribution is divided into several sections. In the first section I recapitulate the semantic field inside which the terms bone and flesh have been found by different scholars of Tibetan history and sociology. In the second section I summarize one indigenous theory of flesh and bone in a local culture of Tibetan stock, as elaborated by one ethnographer. The third section deals with the same opposition pair within the framework of a more general kinship theory; and the remaining five sections test the central hypothesis of this theory with various cases from different corners of the Himalayas.

The terminological context in Tibet

The first European who appears to have understood and articulated Tibetan ideas connected with bone and flesh was Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia, who traveled in Tibet between 1712 and 1727. In his extensive report on Tibetan customs, he writes:

> The Thibettans recognize two classes of kinship. The first are called relations of the Rupá-cik, or of the same bone; the second, relations of the Scia-cik, or of the same blood. They recognize, as relations of Rupá-cik, or of the same bone, those who descend from a common ancestor, however remote, even when they have been divided into different branches during many generations. Relations of the Scia-cik, or the same blood, are those created by legitimate marriages. The first, though it may be exceedingly distant, is looked upon as an absolute and inviolable bar to matrimony, and any intercourse between two relations of the Rupá-cik, or of the same bone, is regarded as incestuous, and they are shunned and loathed by everyone. The second is also a bar to marriage in the first degree of relationship; thus an uncle may not marry his niece, but marriages [sic] with a first cousin on the mother's side is allowed, and frequently occurs.[2]

This sketch is supplemented by a second one, published nearly two hundred years later by the British observer Lewis Sydney Steward O'Malley in the *Census of India*:

> The rules regulating cousin marriage among the Bhotias of Sikkim are probably connected with the institution of fraternal polyandry. There it is not considered right that a man should marry his cousin on the father's side, though recently there have been a few cases where a man had married his father's sister's daughter [one type of cross-cousin]. He may marry his cousin on his mother's side, whether the daughter of his mother's brother or of his mother's sister. The reason given is that the bone descends from the father's side and the flesh from the mother's. Should cousins on the paternal side marry, it is said that the bone is pierced, resulting in course of time in various infirmities.[3]

The Tibetan word for ›bone‹, *rus* implies the following extensions of meaning:

> ›bone‹, ›bone-line‹, ›father's lineage‹, ›patriclan‹, ›clan with territory‹, ›tribe‹. The four big prehistoric clans of Tibet, for instance, are called *Bod-kyi-rus-chen-bzhi*. Since this expression closely resembles another, namely *Bod-khams-ru-bzhi* or ›the four horns of Tibet‹, the two words *rus* for ›bone‹ and *ru* for ›horn‹, ›wing‹, ›division‹, ›banner‹ have at times been merged to form a conceptual unit: that of an exogamic group with independent armed forces.[4]

Besides *rus* for ›bone-line‹, in older Tibetan texts, the term *gdung* or *gdung-rabs* is also encountered, *gdung* being the respectful form of *rus*. Originally, the term *gdung* or *gdung rabs* was probably reserved for the royal bone-line; later it designated the patriline of the nobility. In contrast, *rus* stood for the exogamic clans of the free retinue. Members of a patrilineage, however, could also be designated by other terms, such as *pha-spun* or *phu-nu*. The latter means, strictly speaking, ›elder and younger brother‹; by extension it means ›blood relatives of the same generation in the male line‹, people sharing a common name between whom exists the obligation for mutual help and liability. If a family within this group dies out, the remaining *phu-nu* relatives will inherit its property. The expression *pha-spun* is composed of the elements ›father‹ and ›children of the same parents‹. According to Kowalewsky's *Dictionnaire Mongol-Russe-Français* the word *spun* is equivalent to the Mongol *miqa cisum* = ›flesh-relations‹, a term designating relatives on the maternal side. With the prefixed *phu* ›father‹ the *spun*, or ›children of the same parents‹ are literally drawn over to the paternal side. Both binominal expressions, *pha spun* and *phu nu*, denote people who belong – by horizontal extension – to a common clan; they are patrilateral clan relatives of the same generation. By contrast, the two terms *rupá-cik* (Desideri) and *gdung rabs* characterize relatives of the same clan by vertical extension, through the generations. The horizontal terms complement the vertical ones. All four terms attest even for early Tibetan history the elementary sociological importance of patrilineal clans. These clans were characterized by the following features: a common clan name *rus ming;* a rule of exogamy for all people with a common clan name; common funerary rituals; a common clan territory; common warfare; common warriors *spun mag*.[5]

A remarkable parallel to the Tibetan term for ›bone‹ can be found in the Sanskrit derivatives *hāḍ* and *vānśa*. The first of these means ›bone‹ in a general sense, but also ›bone lineage‹ and ›paternal descent line‹. ›People of the same bone‹ are called *hāḍ nāta,* an equivalent to *vānśa*. The extended meanings of this term may be traced as follows: ›bamboo‹, ›backbone‹, ›unlinear descent‹. The term alludes to an image that combines both aspects of a lineage, the horizontal and the vertical, for each of which the Tibetan language has to employ a separate word. The ›backbone‹ metaphor unites both vertical and horizontal aspects in the following fashion: The superimposed sequence of vertebrae embody the diachronic sequence of generations, the synchronic aspect of bone relatives in the same generation is suggested by the separate elements of which the backbone is constructed: the independent spinal bones. The same combination of aspects is also present in the bamboo metaphor. The straight line of the bamboo cane with its regular segmentation reminds one of a genealogical line with its diachronic sequence of generations; each segment, delimited by its knots, can serve as an obvious marker for a synchronic generation.

As if wanting to illustrate this combination of horizontal and vertical aspects, the Brahmins of Gulmi district in western Nepal enact a ritual during which they take a seat in front of a seven-nodded bamboo cane in order to expel a class of anonymous evil spirits. In the course of seven days, they recite the *Bhāgavata purāṇa* in the direction of the bamboo cane. Each day the evil spirits are forced to climb one section of the bamboo cane, until they disappear altogether after the seventh day. The cane is a genealogical ladder of seven rungs (generations), a span beyond which unaccountable prehistory begins, which means: the evil spirits are driven out of memory.[6] In addition, bamboo does not wither, it is upright, solid, strong and durable; bamboo and backbones do not branch out, they remain a single stem: all qualities that one wishes for a genealogical line. The opposite of this image is our family or genealogical tree which branches out into collateral lines.

The connection between ›bamboo‹ and ›bone‹, as suggested by the Sanskrit word *vānṇa,* can be found also in an origin myth of the northern Magar of Nepal: A cowgirl, neglected and maltreated by her seven witch brothers, is kept alive by an ox who transubstantiates his dung into lentils and rice. The brothers decide to slaughter the animal. Before being slayed, the ox asks the girl to save his bones from the hunting dogs. Secretly the girl buries the bones of her benefactor. Out of the grave the first bamboo springs up, and inside the first bamboo the primordial wild boar is born. This pig becomes the girl's protector and husband, destroyer of her witch-brothers. Thus, those who have eaten the flesh of the ox are exterminated, while the girl who buried its bones is saved by a protagonist created from bones transformed into bamboo.[7]

An indigenous theory of bone-kinship

The Nyinba of northwestern Nepal, (the ethnonym being an invention by the ethnographer Nancy Levine) constitute a local society of immigrants from Tibet, which is divided into two social strata: higher ranking landowners *dagpo* and lower ranking offspring of former slaves *yogpo*.[8] Only the members of the upper stratum belong to established clans or *rü*. In Nyinba thought *rü* covers three meanings: ›bone‹, ›clan‹ and ›membership of a social rank‹. As ›bone‹, *rü* refers to the corporal substance to be found in man and animals alike. It is the basic meaning. In the second meaning, ›clan‹, *rü* describes people who share descent from a common agnatic line of acknowledged ancestors. It is a category of patrilineal descent. The third meaning of *rü* (or *rigs*) hints at the social stratum to which a Nyinba belongs by birth.

All three meanings overlap, for they are founded in a common idea about reproduction and the role played by *rü* in it. The Nyinba believe that the substance *rü* ›bone‹ is transferred from father to offspring in the sexual act, whereby the woman conceives. This substance is transmitted via the male sperm, the white color of which is associated with the white of the bones. The soft, fleshy and red parts of a child's body, however, come from the bones of its mother and are transmitted by her uterine blood.

A very similar concept can be found amongst the Lepcha of Sikkim. According to their theory, life begins at the moment of conception. When the liquids of man and woman mix, the soul of the child descends from the abode of the gods. For the Lepcha, the semen of men and the vaginal secretions of women are parallel substances. They call them penis-water and vagina-water. The semen of the father produces the brain and the bones, the vaginal secretions of the mother the blood and the flesh.[9]

Bone-to-bone transmission through the male sperm is considered by the Nyinba to be primary, with the result that the physical make-up of the child is primarily inherited from the father's line. Each newborn baby is connected with its real father and in equal measure with any forefather in the agnatic line, and even the most distant ancestors are connected with all living bone-relatives through this bone link. All members of a clan have bone substance from the same stock. Belonging to a clan is bone-specific. Everyone can boost his identity in the generator of his bone membership.

Membership to one bone is expressed in public by commensality. ›Eating together‹ means to share oral excretions by consuming food cooked in the same pots over the same fire. This is called *kha dri*, ›mouth-united‹. Man and wife, parents and children, members of the same bone and members of two clans that are connected by marriage; all these are united-by-mouth. This commensality is more prominent in people's everyday awareness than bone membership.

The common physical disposition of bone relatives excludes clan endogamy. Violations against the rule of clan exogamy are extremely rare and will be avenged by mystical sanctions: The Nyinba believe that bone incest splits the bones of the culprits, which will show on their skeletons after death; their offspring will be misshapen, born dead or of such bad health that they will die in early childhood. An intra-clan marriage can be tolerated only after seven generations of common bone-descent.

In respect to the given social strata, the exogamic clans are endogamous. One does not marry outside one's own stratum. Of the two mentioned social strata, only the clans of the landowners have names. Clans with names do not intermarry with clans without names. The norms for layer-endogamy are based on the premise that people of different *rü* in the third sense represent incompatible types of human beings, whose mixture of substances is inappropriate. People say *kha ma dri rü ma dri* ›mouth and bone do not tally‹. Nevertheless, such connections between members of different strata do occur and their children are called *shag tsha* ›half-bloods‹.

The fact that people of different strata are separated in regard to oral and sexual contacts is explained solely by their bones not getting along. *Rü* is considered an attribute of real bones, but this substance is independent of the bones of an individual. It is a substance that defines the physical shape and mental disposition of a person. As all members of a clan partake in the same *rü* substance, it is this that constitutes their specific clanship. People of the same stratum share certain qualities of *rü* which allow them to search their partner in the same stratum – and nowhere else. In this way *rü* may be regarded as a hereditary and

elementary substance, which forms the natural basis for consanguineous and affinal kin relationships, for descent and social rank, handed down through men.

The complementary substance to *rü* is *t'ag* = ›blood‹, sometimes also referred to as *sha* = ›flesh‹. In Nyinba kinship theory *t'ag* is the elementary substance for kinship ties generated through women. No *rü* without *t'ag*. But *t'ag* is only complementary to *rü,* in so far as the primary component for the production of uterine blood of a woman is the substance *rü* that she inherits through her father. A woman transmits the substance *rü* of her father to her children through the medium of her blood. This transmitted substance becomes the ›blood substance‹ of the child. Whereas men transmit their ›bone substance‹ *rü* as *rü,* women transmit their inherited ›bone substance‹ as blood, *t'ag.* Consequently, the Nyinba do not envisage a pure and independent blood line passed on through members on the matrilateral side. For them, *t'ag* is a derived substance which cannot be handed down to future generations in its integral quantity. For this reason, the contribution made by a woman in the transmission of substance has a smaller range than that of a man. Nevertheless, *t'ag* provides the framework for matrilateral kinship relations; for the complementary nature of descent; and for a bilateral quality of the rank system.

The mother-child relationship is the connecting point to the maternal relatives. These are collectively called *t'ag*-relatives or ›mother-relatives‹. Agnates are termed *rü*-relatives. The main difference between the two is that the genealogical depth of matrilateral kin is shallower. It does not extend further than three generations, starting from one mother-child relationship. Parallel cousins on the mother's side are referred to as *t'ag pun,* ›brothers and sisters by blood‹, whereas children of brothers are spoken of as *rüpa pun,* ›brothers and sisters by bone‹. Cross-cousins, on the other hand, are called *nyen,* ›affines‹, as they are considered possible marriage partners. As a matter of fact, marriage between real or classificatory cross-cousins (no matter which side) is praised as an ideal connection. It is said that affinity will be created through ›blood‹ (*t'ag*), and the *t'ag*-name that a person carries is the clan- or *rü*-name of his or her mother. ›Bone‹ and ›blood‹ are metonymic descriptions for kinship. What children get through their father is ›bone‹: physical appearance, abilities, features of character, temperament. The transmission is not reduced to qualities of bone structure; the substance ›bone‹ is rather the vehicle for the transmission of an overall genetic package. The contribution of women in the guise of *t'ag* is their total hereditary substance, the ›bone‹-share of their own father's line, distilled in their uterine blood.

Clans or members of a bone-lineage do not enter into action collectively. They do not own a specific stretch of land, they do not refer to a clan territory, and they have no claims on common possessions. What they do have, is an exclusive right to a name of their own and a genealogical consciousness of considerable depth, strengthened by the awareness of having a common ancestor and a common clan deity *rü-lha.*

An anthropological theory dealing with bone and flesh

The indigenous theory of bone-kinship just presented, the conceptual refinement and complexity of which will not have escaped the reader's attention, should now be complemented by some theoretical reflections made more than half a century ago by one of the leading anthropologists of his time. It is worthwhile reconsidering these thoughts, as they were directly connected with an outline of a new theoretical foundation to the study of kinship and marriage alliance. In his epochal work *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté* (1949), Claude Lévi-Strauss dedicated two entire chapters to questions relevant to our topic, one of which was specifically entitled "Bone and Flesh."

To recapitulate the context, in brief Lévi-Strauss isolated in his opus three elementary structures of kinship that accord with three forms of kin marriage: bilateral, patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage. The first of these forms, bilateral cross-cousin marriage, leads to a system of restricted exchange of women with direct reciprocity between pairs of alliance partners. The matrilateral type generates a system of generalized exchange of women, who are given unidirectionally from one group to the next without direct reciprocity between participating groups, of which at least three are necessary for a full circle of indirect reciprocity. The third form, patrilateral cross-cousin marriage, was characterized by Lévi-Strauss as a rather impractical mixture of the other two forms, as it needed at least three alliance partners (like the matrilateral

type), and as one kin group would function with respect to another one as both wife-giver and wife-receiver (as in the bilateral case), not simultaneously, but in successive generations. Regarding these three elementary forms of kinship alliance Lévi-Strauss argued that, from a sociological point of view, the matrilateral type would constitute the most perfect system, since it allowed all alliance groups of a society to participate in a single ring of exchange. This advantage, he thought, might have contributed to the enormous success of the matrilateral type of cross-cousin marriage over large stretches of Asia. According to him, generalized exchange was spread, at least in more archaic periods, from the Gilyak in the extreme east of Siberia, via ancient China, Tibet and the eastern Himalaya, down to the Kachin of Burma in the south. Many diluted contemporary systems, mixed with forms of restricted exchange, like those of the Tungus and Manchu, of the Olcha and Naga, were, according to Lévi-Strauss, at one time guided by a regime of generalized exchange.

The belief (found in Tibet and other peripheral regions) that the bones of a person come from the father's side and the flesh from the mother's should be regarded as a true ›leitmotiv‹ to the presence of generalized exchange. Especially in Tibet, the distinction between bone relatives and flesh relatives could be "connected objectively with the formula of generalized exchange. And in China as well as in Siberia it was probably the same."[10] It should be stressed that "this distinction is incompatible with a system of restricted exchange [...] for in a system with restricted exchange each group is both bone and flesh to one another, as it produces, to employ the language of scholastics, in the same way and at the same time both fathers and mothers."[11] In a system of generalized exchange, on the contrary, two exchange groups form a pair of opposites, where one is exclusively bone to the other and the other exclusively flesh to the former. "If one accepts this analysis, one can conclude that the distinction between bone and flesh, wherever one may encounter it in this or in a similar form, will indicate with all probability the previous or present existence of a system of indirect exchange." [12]

The central thesis reformulated for our context is as follows: The conceptualization of bone and flesh makes sense in societies that praise the practice of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage; in those that prefer the patrilateral or the bilateral type and in all others that have a system of symmetrical exchange, the distinction between relatives of the bone and relatives of the blood is a contradiction. In the following sections I would like to put this proposition of Lévi-Strauss to an empirical test by using examples that were not yet known at the time when he published *Les structures*. Consequently, they could not have helped him to amend his proposed thesis. Yet, each of the examples chosen comes from the larger cultural area which supplied him with ethnographic matter for his own arguments.

Bone and flesh in variable alliance systems

Magar.

Amongst the northern Magar of the Dhaulagiri region in northwestern Nepal, one encounters a matrimonial system which seems to confirm unambiguously the thesis propagated by Lévi-Strauss. This ethnic group prescribes marriage with mother's brother's daughter (or her classificatory substitute), resulting in a mode of indirect exchange of women. Peculiar to the Magar is the fact that this indirect exchange is achieved by means of a minimalist formula: Each of the various marriage groups participates in a matrimonial bond consisting of three partners only. Thus, the local society is divided into a set of independent matrimonial triangles. In this truly circulative system of delayed exchange, each alliance group appears as wife-giver to the second partner and as wife-receiver to the third, whereas that same group's own wife-giver becomes wife-receiver of their own wife-receiver group. This pattern is repeated from generation to generation in unaltered fashion, as long as this is demographically feasible. In this way, the triangular relation of exchanging partners is extended by a long-lasting dual relationship of wife-giver and wife-receiver. In this fixed dual relation, the local term for the patrilineal descent group, *rus* or ›bone‹, automatically adopts the meaning of ›wife-receiver‹. Accordingly, the expression for the descent group of a woman, i.e. *sya* or ›flesh‹ (alternatively also called *nui* or ›milk‹) subsumes the meaning of a ›wife-giving group‹. The double expression *sya-rus* designates givers and takers, predisposed as such by the practiced alliance system.[13] In

this disposition, *sya* constantly remains ›flesh‹ for a given ›bone‹ group or *rus*, just as *rus* permanently remains ›bone‹ for a given ›flesh‹ group or *sya*, quite in accordance with the Lévi-Straussian prediction. Therefore it is fully justified to state that for Magar society the conceptual pair of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ as an expression of an immutable relation between wife-receiver and wife-giver does indeed point to the practice of indirect, generalized exchange, with the small reservation that the word ›generalized‹ should be avoided for the Magar, as the various matrimonial triangles separate the society into independent units rather bringing them together into a single bond.

Tamang

The Tamang of central Nepal are divided into a certain number of patriclans which they call *rui* or ›bones‹. In one of their written texts, the *Ruichen cyopge* or the ›Eighteen Big Bones‹, their various places of origin – all in Tibet – are enumerated, and each of the clans is associated with a specific clan deity, or *rui-gi-pho-lha.*[14] The cult of these ›bone deities‹ plays an important role in the religious life of the Tamang. The clan or ›bone‹ can be characterized by the following criteria: by patrilinearity; by patrilocality; by a strict rule of exogamy according to which any ›breaking of the bone‹ *hāḍ phorowa* (that is, sexual union within the clan) will be treated as incest, by the presence of clan-owned territories (*kipaṭ*), and by the worship of clan-specific deities. Membership of a clan is inherited through the bones of the father's body, *na khru.*

Tamang kinship terminology is predominantly symmetrical: parallel cousins and cross-cousins are separated by different denominations; cross-cousins on both sides, however, form a single category, whereas parallel cousins are grouped with brothers and sisters. The marriage system is semi-prescriptive. Sister-exchange with symmetrical modes of reciprocity is frequently practiced and preferably is repeated in subsequent generations. Sister-exchange is locally called *depa* = ›swap‹ or ›barter‹.[15] This expression is used by the Tamang with reference to cross-cousin marriage of the bilateral type. The bilateral type can also be encountered amongst the Nyinba dealt with above. Bilateral cross-cousin marriage is an ideal case of the mode of direct exchange, with immediate reciprocity between a pair of exchanging partners. But this, according to Lévi-Strauss, mismatches the distinction between bone-relatives and flesh-relatives as designations for the exchanging groups.

Kiranti

The various Kiranti tribes of eastern Nepal also employ the metaphors of ›bone‹ and a complementary substance for affinal relations. They call relatives on the father's side *hāḍ* or *hāḍ nāta;* those on the mother's side are called *dudh* or ›milk‹. ›Bone‹ or *hāḍ* comprises the agnates, ›milk‹ or *dudh* the uterine kin. In their kinship terminology, cross-cousins are usually paired with sisters. Moreover, sexual joking between cousins is prohibited, which indicates that marriage between them is not valued at all. Unions between agnates are tabooed for seven generations, those between matrilateral kin for three. Once the taboo period of seven generations for bone relatives has run out, intra-clan marriages are not only tolerated, but intentionally sought. Such a marriage between agnates is termed *hāḍ phora* or ›breaking the bones‹; one inside the mother's line is called *dudh phora* or ›breaking the milk line‹. A single intra-clan connection of the *hāḍ phora* type leads immediately to clan fission. A formerly solid exogamic clan group is now split up into two separate marriage units, between which the contraction of marital ties is encouraged. The members of the two newly established clan segments receive different magical clan names. Thus, the expression of ›breaking the bones‹ for this act of clan fission is in no way a verbal exaggeration. The process is of elementary importance for the dynamics of demographic change.

›Breaking the bones‹ is the means to procure new alliance partners or to dissolve existing marriage relations that do not work any longer, be this for statistical or other reasons. Even if exogamy at the clan level is required for at least seven generations in the male line, the institution of marriage does not promote outward communication. Instead, people prefer village endogamy and endogamy within those branches of clans that have split up by the mechanism of ›breaking the bones‹. This obvious tendency for endopraxis leads to an atomization and localization of society and may have contributed to the fact that the Kiranti as a whole have split up into numerous tribes and subtribes to a much greater degree than other hill tribes of the Nepalese Himalaya.[16]

The remarkably close relationship noted between brother and sister argues against ›breaking of the milk line‹. Marriage through ›breaking the bones‹, on the other hand, is the second best solution for a brother not to leave go of his sister: She will marry close to him, into a branch that has been broken off the same stem and into a group on close terms and from which sisters can be expected in return. Even if direct sister exchange is considered unpropitious, since cross-cousins of any kind are prohibited marriage partners, the Ḳiranti nonetheless praise one particular form of direct exchange as their ideal: classificatory sister exchange. Thinking and acting in this way, they bring together what Lévi-Strauss found incompatible: a division of affinal kin into bone-relatives and milk-relatives with a mode of direct matrimonial exchange.

Naxi

Moving from the Indo-Nepalese Himalaya to the eastern quarters in the Sino-Tibetan marshes, some tribal groups living there exhibit the same distinctive pair of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ to denominate agnatic and uterine kin groups. The kinship system of the Naxi of northwestern Yunnan, for instance, is based on the assumption that paternal relatives supply the bones of an individual and maternal ones the flesh. Fathers are ›bone‹, mothers are ›flesh‹; sons are ›bone‹, daughters are ›flesh‹. Women are like trees, men are like rocks; women are mobile, men are not. Just like trees which root on rocks, women take root on the bones of men. Coming from the bone-line of their fathers, women bring ›flesh‹ into the bone-line of their husbands. In this way they play a dual role in entertaining an ambiguous relation to two ›bones‹ between which they mediate with their ›flesh‹.[17]

In the pictographic images of Naxi religious texts, relatives on both sides are represented jointly by two pictographs (*k'o nddü*) the first of which – a fence – designates the male paternal relatives and the second – a fern – the females on the paternal side and all maternal relatives. These two pictographs suggest, in the case of the *fence,* the permanent fixation of the bone-line to one location, and in the case of the *fern,* the transplantability of women and their ›flesh‹ substance. All relatives on the father's side, members of a common patriclan, are represented by the pictorial sign for ›bone‹ (*o*) and all relatives on the mother's side by the sign for ›lean meat‹ (*na*), which replaces the more general word for ›meat‹ (*shi*).[18]

The metonymies of bone and flesh affect many aspects of a Naxi life from conception to death and beyond. After death, the flames of the pyre separate bones and flesh. The flesh will rise to the sky in the form of smoke, the bones, buried, will return to the earth. This reminds the living of a prominent Naxi origin myth, according to which the first human being, a man named Ts'o, after surviving a cataclysmic flood, went to the sky in the search of a wife. After many years of *corvée* service to the sky god, he managed to marry the god's daughter and bring her down to earth. This is why the sky as the first wife-giver is connected with ›flesh‹, and the first male on earth as wife-receiver with ›bone‹. In remembrance of their mythic ancestor Ts'o, the Naxi also designate their patriclans by the picture combination *Ts'o-o* ›bones of Ts'o‹. *Ts'o-o* is an exogamic unit, and under ideal conditions also a residential one. Pure bone villages (that is villages inhabited only by members of a single patriclan) are relatively rare, but they do exist. Once a year, for the festive Sacrifice to the Sky, in the course of which the sky bride of the first ancestor is symbolically commemorated, every Naxi returns to the village of his ›bone‹ relatives.[19]

›Bone‹ relatives have a horizontal and a vertical extension. In vertical (or diachronic) perspective, ›bones‹ have an unlimited genealogical depth. In horizontal (or synchronic) perspective, the clan (*ts'o-o*) regulates marriage politics and the law of inheritance (land, house, domestic animals). Marriage within the ›bone‹ is frowned upon and considered as incest which would, in pre-communist times, have been punished severely by the ›people of one's own bone‹.

The opposition of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹, important though it may be in Naxi thought and in everyday conduct, cannot, however, be transferred to concepts such as wife-receiver and wife-giver. For ›relatives of the flesh‹ can be both wife-givers and wife-receivers at the same time to the ›bone-line‹ of a person. This follows from the logic of the preferred marriage rule which recommends taking home as wife the daughter of one's father's sister. In other words, the Naxi practice, at least in ideal circumstances, patrilateral cross-cousin marriage. They describe this solution with the formula: ›Mother's brother catches the daughter of his sister for his son‹. In some rare cases matrilateral cross-cousin marriage or matrilateral parallel cousin

marriage may also occur, but neither is particularly approved. For these two types the Naxi employ the formula: "On the head of the muntyak and the river deer there is only bone (horn) and no flesh," which is interpreted in the following way: in both cases the bride has to follow the same ›route‹, (matrimonial direction) as the sister of her father (in the case of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage) or the sister of her mother (in the case of matrilateral parallel cousin marriage). It is obvious that for the Naxi, patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the ideal solution. As a result, the roles of wife-giver and wife-receiver cannot be determined once and for all; in fact they are inverted in each generation between two partner groups. This does not however prevent them, contrary to the prognosis put forward by Lévi-Strauss, from employing with permanent success the opposition of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ to separate paternal and maternal, agnatic and collateral relatives.

Moso

The immediate neighbors of the Naxi to the north, the Moso, who in historical perspective are closely related to them, show a mixed picture of social organization. Their society is divided into three social strata: aristocracy, commoners and serfs. The aristocracy is characterized by patrilineal descent, while the two lower strata are matrilineally oriented.

Amongst the aristocrats, children obtain their name and their inherited possessions through the father's line. The lower strata, on the other hand, are organized in a different way: Amongst them, brothers and sisters remain in the household of their birth for their entire lives. Instead of marriage in the ordinary sense of the word, the Moso of these strata practice for the most part a form of relationship which they call *tisese* (›going back and forth‹) and which has been termed an ›institutionalized sexual union‹[20] and for practical purposes might be translated as ›visiting marriage‹.

According to this arrangement, a man lives in the household of his sister, while his temporary or life-long sexual partner lives in a different homestead. During the day, the man works for the household of his descent group, the night he spends at the house of his partner – as a visitor. Children that are produced from such a union, belong to the household of their mother. Thus, everyone lives matri- or natolocally. Natural fatherhood is not a matter of debate. The role of ›father‹ is taken over by the maternal uncle of the child, who lives in the same household as the child's mother and who is a visiting partner in another one. Name and property are handed down through the mother's line, for, in this system of non-marital partnership, patrilineal descent would not make much sense.

How does a society like this align the concept of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹? Is it known at all to the Moso? What is the use of a term for agnatic relatives, i.e. ›bone‹, where the patriline has no importance, where its existence is virtually negated? ›Bone‹ (*ong, ō* or *ah*) comes from the mother, say the Moso. If a family has no daughter, the bone line is interrupted. And where does the ›flesh‹ come from? ›Bone and flesh both come form the mother's side‹; ›bone and flesh exist together‹; ›without bone flesh cannot come up‹.[21]

Traditionally, those people who have a common female ancestor live under one roof; they are called *ong hing,* ›people of the bone‹. People of a common ›bone‹ are those who agree in recognizing a common female ancestor. The matrilineal residential group of consanguineal relatives living under a common roof is called *lhe.* ›All members of one *lhe* are of the same bone‹. Those who live together as relatives are sexually taboo to each other. Even if they do not live together under a common roof, people recognizing a common female ancestor in the mother's line are considered as related by consanguinity. Sanctions against incest are severe. Children resulting from an incestuous relation have no ›bones‹.

If the ethnographic information we have so far about this complex of Moso sociology are correct, we are confronted with a twofold distortion. On the one hand, we are dealing with two different systems of descent within one and the same society, one being patrilineal and one matrilineal, depending on whether we are looking at the aristocratic stratum or at the two lower strata, those of commoners the serfs. Among the aristocrats, one might expect a pattern conforming with those previously presented, according to which the term ›bone‹ is related to the agnatic relatives in the patriline and ›flesh‹ to those on the mother's side. In the second system, (employed by the commoners and serfs), in which marital union is replaced by visiting partnerships and in which brothers and sisters share a life-long domestic group within a household of

maternal predecessors, the terms ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ are monopolized by the matriline. This appropriation is made possible by the fact that – lacking wedlock and matrimonial union – the difference between allies (and in consequence the separation of partners on the male and on the female side) is not a necessity. ›Bone‹ and ›flesh‹, in a system of this kind, need not be brought together; they are, as the Moso say, together from the start. Their juxtaposition becomes irrelevant.

In this respect, the Moso differ from all the other cases discussed, however briefly, so far. No matter to which type of kin marriage the other Himalayan test cases give preference: to matrilateral cross-cousin marriage as the Magar; to patrilateral cross-cousin marriage as the Naxi; to bilateral cross-cousin marriage or sister exchange as the Nyinba and Tamang; or to a type in which cousin marriage is excluded but in which, by way of ›breaking the bones‹, new options for direct reciprocal exchange of women are opened up, as suggested by the Kiranti material: in all these Himalayan examples the term ›bone‹ designates the patriline, while a complementary term (›flesh‹, ›milk‹, or ›blood‹) stands for the mother's line, for the relatives by affinity.

Some of the examples dealt with so far were stratified societies, such as the Nyinba (and perhaps the Tamang in former days), divided into two and, in the case of the Moso, into three social strata. Each of these strata has its own exclusivities and restrictions. Among the Moso the two lower levels cannot intermarry with the aristocrats, who in fact display an altogether different system of descent; and amongst the Nyinba, the clans of the upper level carry names, whereas those of the lower do not. This difference expresses the impossibility of matrimonial communication between the two ranks. Extending the radius of investigation a fraction further east and further north, one will find more cases of societies that combine exogamic clans with endogamic social strata. And here we will find that the term ›bone‹, while continuing to designate an exogamic patriline, is split up into two subcategories to meet the division of society into endogamic ranks. This separation is occasionally expressed by splitting the category ›bone‹ into ›black‹ and ›white‹.

White and black bones

According to older ethnographies on the Yi (formerly called Lolo) in Yunnan and Sichuan provinces, members of this ethnic group had to marry outside their own clans but within their social class, thus pairing clan exogamy with class endogamy. Society was divided into three social layers, forming two classes. The uppermost layer comprised the ruling class *nuoke,* the aristocrats who held the biggest share of landed property and of the means of production. This layer/class was spoken of as the ›black bones‹, in contrast to the ›white bones‹ made up of the two lower layers of society, constituted by the *qunuo,* people of free origin and owners of fields and means of production in modest proportions, who were nevertheless under the obligation to do *corvée* and military services for the ›black bones‹; and by the *ajia,* dwelling and working on the property of their masters without any means of production of their own. Marriage between members of the two lower layers was admitted, but strictly prohibited between the two classes of ›black bones‹ and ›white bones‹. Thus, the bisection of the system along the division line of black and white bones, rather than the tripartition of social layers was decisive for marriage restrictions. Sexual relations between a ›black bone‹ woman and a ›white bone‹ man were severely punished, sometimes even by the death penalty. Within the two classes there existed a number of patrilocal and exogamic clans. The preferred type of kin alliance was bilateral cross-cousin marriage.[22]

The division of society into ›black bones‹ and ›white bones‹ to denote hierarchical endogamous ranks is also a widely spread phenomenon amongst the peoples of the central Asian steppes, but with an inversion of the color assignment. For instance, the clans of the Kalmuk have been described since the earliest reports as being divided into the ›white bones‹ of the aristocrats and the ›black bones‹ of the commoners. The word for ›bone‹ *yasum* unites the relatives on the father's side, while the relatives in the mother's line are summarized as ›flesh people‹, just as in the Himalayas. Johann Gottlieb Georgi speaks of three ›estates‹ of the Kalmuk: The nobles, to whom the princes also belong and whom they call the ›white bones‹; the priestly estate; and the common people called the ›black bones‹. "Nobles of female sex are white flesh and the

common females black flesh, but the descent is traced without reference to the flesh, but only according to the bone."[23]

The Kazakhs of the Altai region used to employ two different terms to denote their patrilineal clans, both carrying the meaning of ›bone‹: one being *sök* and the other *uru* or *ruu,* this last possibly being related to the Tibetan word *ru(s),* while *sök* can be found both in Mongolian and in several Turkic dialects. Just like the Kalmuk, the Kazakh of the Altai distinguished between two layered ranks: the ›white bones‹ *aq syek* (*sök*) designating the noble clans descended from Jenghis Khan; and the ›black bones‹ *kara syek,* consisting of the commoners. Just as it was prohibited to marry within one's own ›bone‹, marriages between ›white bones‹ and ›black bones‹ were likewise not allowed.[24]

The image of ›bone relatives‹ for the agnates on the father's side and the complementary image of ›flesh-relatives‹ on the mother's side are for Lawrence Krader the major conceptualization for the supremacy of the principle of patrilinearity in all pastoral societies of the Asiatic steppes. At the same time this concept was used to consolidate the interior division of society into classes. According to him the division into ›white bones‹ and ›black bones‹, was a step to ossify the structure of society: wherever it occurred "states or empires were established, great despotic and monarchic enterprises."[25] The societies concerned were the Ordos, the Khalkha, the Chakar and all eastern Mongolian groups; the Kalmuks amongst the western Mongols; and the Kazakh and the Usbek among the Turks. The only ones to escape these developments were the Altai Turks, the Kirgiz, the Buryats, the Monguor of Gansu and the Turkmen, as they never made the division between ›white‹ and ›black‹ bones.

In view of the manifold compatibilities that have become apparent, in this combined theoretical and field study, between the conceptual pair of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ and different elementary types of marriage alliance, it is debatable whether the sharp contrasts which Lévi-Strauss formulated in regard to the two basic modes of reciprocity – direct and restricted exchange on the one hand and indirect and generalized exchange on the other – are really fundamental; or whether they are not passages from one to the other. It was in this direction that the senior master of anthropology pointed his argument in a most recent number of *L'Homme,* dedicated exclusively to kinship studies. In his epilogue, Lévi-Strauss distinguished two modalities of generalized exchange, an aleatoric one and a directional one. For the modality caused by chance, he gave a simple formula: One gives to others than those from whom one receives; and one receives from others than those to whom one gives. Consequently, the directional form of generalized exchange is only a special case within the aleatoric modality and restricted exchange only a special case within directional, generalized exchange, representing its narrow limit.[26] The wealth of marriage regulations and the variable types of alliance with which the concept of ›bone‹ and ›flesh‹ are compatible, point in the direction of such a view.

I end my little Himalayan survey with a note on the Sherpa with whom I originally began. Their social organization rests on strong patrilineal and patrilocal clans which they call *ru* or ›bones‹. The complementary substance *sha* ›flesh‹ designates the relatives on the female side. There is nothing peculiar to this. It confirms the expected pattern, followed by many Tibetan and other Himalayan local cultures. The *rus yig* or *Report on the Bones* and other documents on Sherpa clan history suggest an insight into the development and transformation of their basic social units. This insight informs us that the Sherpa at the time of their migration from Kham to Solu Khumbu and their formation as an ethnic group in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries comprised four protoclans. This number may be conventional to fit the ancient Tibetan model of the *Bod-kyi-rus-chen-bzhi* or ›Four Big Clans of Tibet‹; or it may be a version of the fourfold social classification suggested by Nick Allen as an underlying pattern for various cis- and trans-Himalayan societies.[27]

In any case, in the course of the settlers' territorial expansion in Solu Khumbu, these four proto-clans split up into a considerable number of subclans (over thirty by the middle of the twentieth century). Now, the amazing result of a statistical survey that I conducted in 1965 on Sherpa migration and marriage patterns was the fact that these new clan units, each of which had adopted a new clan name and some of which had even occupied freshly acquired clan territories in the new clans' names, continued to operate matrimonially as if they had never split up. None of the new subclans would contract a marriage with another subclan when

both were sure to be derived from a common protoclan. Despite the considerable number of thirty-odd named subclans into which the Sherpa became divided, they continued to act in their matrimonial habits as if they still comprised only four.

In other words: Sherpa clans are extremely solid: the ›bones‹ may split or branch out, but they cannot be broken. This is a collective conduct in striking contrast to that of the neighboring Kiranti groups. Whereas the latter practice a narrow form of matrimonial endopraxis with constant breaking up of bones, the Sherpa display a very high level of exopraxis. Because of their unbending loyalty to their rule of clan exogamy, their original ›bones‹ have remained – subcutaneously – intact. This conspicuous feature of strict exopraxis may be seen in the light of another characteristic of Sherpa social organization: they have never adopted any elementary form of marriage alliance, – neither matrilateral, nor bilateral nor patrilateral cross-cousin marriage. Nevertheless, they distinguish between bone-relatives and flesh-relatives. For them, this distinction has nothing to do with restricted or with generalized exchange; it is just an invitation to the ›bones‹ to remain straight and continuous and to hold to the single rule that the Sherpa have followed from the earliest times: to marry women of different ›flesh‹ outside their own ›bone‹.

Notes

1. A German translation of the *rus yig* appeared in: Michael Oppitz: *Geschichte und Sozialordnung der Sherpa,* Innsbruck/München 1968: 34ff. and the original text was reproduced as: *lcags dpon gsangs gyas dpal 'jor: rus yig* – Text des "Berichts von den Knochen" in der Originalfassung, in: F.W. Funke (ed.): *Die Sherpa und ihre Nachbarn,* Innsbruck/München 1982, pp. 285-295.
2. Filippo de Filippi: *An Account of Tibet, The Travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia, S.J. 1712-1727,* London 1932, p. 192.
3. L. S. S. O'Malley in the *Census of India, 1911,* vol. V, p. 326.
4. Eric Haarh: *The Yarlung Dynasty,* Kobenhavn 1969, Ch.12: p. 271 ff., and Giuseppe Tucci: "The Secret Characters of the Kings of Ancient Tibet," *East and West,* VI, 3, p. 204.
5. A. Róna Tas: "Social Terms in the List of Grants of the Tibetan Tun-Huang Chronicle," *Acta Orientalia Scientiarum Hungaricae,* V, 3, 1955, pp. 249-270.
6. Marie Lecomte-Tilouine: "The proof of the bone: lineage and devali in Central Nepal," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.) 27, 1, 1993, p. 4.
7. Michael Oppitz: "The Wild Boar and the Plough. Origin Stories of the Northern Magar," *Kailash,* X, 3, 1983, pp. 187-226.
8. The description of Nyinba social thought presented here, paraphrases to a large extent Nancy Levine: "The Theory of Rü: Kinship, Descent and Status in a Tibetan Society," *Himalayan Highland Societies in Anthropological Perspective,* edited by Chr. von Fürer-Haimendorf, New Delhi 1981, pp. 52-77; and Ch. 3: "Descendent, Kinship, and Alliance" of Nancy Levine: *The Dynamics of Polyandry. Kinship, Domesticity and Population on the Tibetan Border,* Chicago 1988.
9. Geoffrey Gorer: *Himalayan Village,* London 1938, p. 283.
10. Claude Lévi-Strauss: *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté,* Paris 1949, p. 486.
11. Ibid. p. 486.
12. Ibid. p. 487.
13. Michael Oppitz: *Onkels Tochter keine sonst. Heiratsbündnis und Denkweise in einer Lokalkultur des Himalaya,* Frankfurt 1991, p. 43 ff.
14. Alexander W. Macdonald: "Les Tamang vus par l'un d'eux," *L'Homme,* VI, 1, 1966, pp. 27-58.
15. Gérard Toffin: "Unités de parenté, système d'alliance et de prestations chez les Tamang de l'Ouest," *Anthropos,* 81, 1986, pp. 21-45.
16. For the Kulunge Rai, see Charles McDougal: "Structure and Division in Kulunge Rai Society," *Kailash,* I, 3, 1973, pp. 205-224 and: *The Kulunge Rai. A Study in Kinship and Marriage Exchange* (Bibliotheca Himalayica III, 14), Kathmandu 1979. For the Mewahang Rai, see Martin Gaenszle: *Verwandtschaft und Mythologie bei den Mewahang Rai in Ostnepal,* Stuttgart 1991, Ch. 20, pp. 213-238.
17. Charles F. McKhann: "Fleshing out the Bones: The Cosmic and Social Dimensions of Space in Naxi Architecture," in: *Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups in China,* edited by Chien Chiao and Nicholas Tapp, *New Asia Academic Bulletin* vol. VIII, Hong Kong 1989 pp. 157-177. Charles McKhann's: *Fleshing out the Bones: Kinship and Cosmology in*

Naqxi Religion, Ph. D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1992, Ch. 7, "Of Bone and Flesh: Kinship and Marriage," pp. 298-329.

18. Gernot Prunner: "The Kinship System of the Nakhi (SW-China) as Seen in Their Pictographic Script," *Ethnos*, 34, 1969, pp. 102-104.
19. The Sacrifice to the Sky ritual is described in: "The Propitiation of Heaven. Photographs by Joseph Rock," in: *Naxi and Moso Ethnography. Kin, Rites, Pictographs,* edited by Michael Oppitz and Elisabeth Hsu, Zurich 1998, pp. 173-188.
20. Shih Chuan-kang: *The Yongning Moso: Sexual Union and Household Organisation, Gender and Ethnicity in a Matrilineal Duolocal Society in Southwest China.* Stanford University, Ph. D. dissertation, Stanford 1993; and two articles by the same author: "Mortuary Rituals and Symbolism among the Moso," in: *Naxi and Moso Ethnography. Kin, Rites, Pictographs*, edited by Michael Oppitz and Elisabeth Hsu, Zurich 1998: 103-125; and: "Tisese and its anthropological significance. Issues around the visiting sexual system among the Moso," *L'Homme*, 154-155, 2000, pp. 697-709. Susanne Knödel: *Die matrilinearen Mosuo von Yongning: Eine quellenkritische Auswertung moderner chinesischer Ethnographien*, "Kölner Ethnologische Studien," 22, Münster 1995.
21. Cai Hua: *Une société sans père ni mari. Les Na de Chine,* Paris 1997, p. 95 f.
22. Lin Yueh-hwa: "The Kinship System of the Lolo," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 11, 1946, pp. 81-95; Lin Yueh-Hwa: *The Lolo of Liang Shan*, New Haven 1961; Han Yi Feng and John K. Shyrock: "The Historical Origins of the Lolo," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 3, 1938, no. 2; Paul K. Benedict: "Tibetan and Chinese Kinship Terms," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 6, 1941, pp. 313-337.
23. Johann Gottlieb Georgi: *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reiches* (vier Teile), St. Petersburg 1776-1780, p. 402.
24. A. E. Hudson: *Kazak Social Structure*, New Haven 1938, pp. 18, 78.
25. Lawrence Krader: *Social Organisation of the Mongol Turkic Pastoral Nomads*, Indiana University Publications. Uralic and Altaic Series, vol. 20, The Hague 1963, p. 324.
26. Claude Lévi-Strauss: "Postface," *L'Homme*, 154-155, 2000, p. 714.
27. Nicholas Allen: "Fourfold classifications of society in the Himalayas," in: James Fisher (ed.): *Himalayan Anthropology: The Indo-Tibetan interface,* The Hague 1978: pp. 7-25; and Nicholas Allen: "Quadripartition of society in early Tibetan Sources," *Journal Asiatique*, 266, 1978, pp. 341-360.

'JU MI PHAM RNAM RGYAL RGYA MTSHO. HIS POSITION IN THE TIBETAN RELIGIOUS HIERARCHY AND A SYNOPTIC SURVEY OF HIS CONTRIBUTIONS

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The history of Tibetan scholarship, especially that of rNying ma, the earliest school of Tibetan Buddhism, entered a new phase in the nineteenth century. This era not only saw the proliferation of visionary teachings (*dag snang* and *dgongs gter*)[1] and the development of the ecumenical (*ris med*) movement[2] but also witnessed a strong regeneration of rNying ma literary activity. Among the numerous luminaries of this period was 'Ju Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho (1846-1912), perhaps the greatest polymath Tibet ever produced. Mipham was both an extraordinary scholar and a saint in whom the sNga 'gyur rNying ma doctrine found renewed expression. The contribution of Mipham to rNying ma scholarship and thereby to wider Tibetan and Buddhist learning is prodigious in its novelty, profundity and variety. His writings comprise works on a wide range of subjects, covering almost every science known to his milieu.

To the western audience, it was E. Gene Smith who first introduced Mipham in 1969 describing him as 'one of the most imaginative and versatile minds to appear in the Tibetan tradition'.[3] Since then, although the extraordinary nature of his life and works began to attract the attention of western scholars, his enigmatic life and monumental works remain little studied. Despite the brief discussions of Mipham's life and works by Steven Goodman[4] and John Pettit,[5] and the rendering of the catalogue of his writings into German by Dieter Schuh,[6] no attempt has so far been made to gain a complete overview of his output, to reveal the assumptions which lie behind it, or to assess its significance as whole.

Having explored his works briefly, I shall attempt to provide a purview of his massive collection of writings and highlight some of his outstanding contributions. In the first part of this paper, I shall appraise his position in the Tibetan Buddhist and the scholarly hierarchies and shall then undertake a synoptic discussion of his writings. This paper, however, is far from being a comprehensive study of Mipham's writings and it would not do justice to his diverse and stupendous contributions to even attempt to summarise them in a few pages.

The Position of Mipham in the Tibetan Religious and Scholarly Hierarchies

It might not be an exaggeration to claim that Mipham is the most remarkable polyhistorian and prolific writer in the whole history of Tibetan Buddhism. As far as we know, only one scholar, Bo dong Paṇ chen Phyogs las rNam rgyal (1375-1451),[7] surpassed Mipham in the volume of his work. Yet Mipham remains unparalleled in his versatility and originality for Bo dong Paṇ chen was not as protean and innovative as he. Mipham's wide range of interests not only made him master most of the traditional sciences and arts, but led to the composition and presentation of new theories and methods in philosophy, epistemology, medicine, astrology, art, architecture. It is due to this polymathic nature of his learning and to his exceptional ingenuity that Mipham today ranks amongst the leading religious and spiritual celebrities of Tibet.

Mipham stands among such great masters as Klong chen pa (1308-63), Sa skya Paṇ chen (1182-1251), Tsong kha pa (1357-1419), and Pad ma dKar po (1527-92). Like a few other masters of superb erudition, Mipham has earned such respect and devotion from posterity that he has come to be accorded the title Omniscient (*Kun mkhyen*).[8] Although the title *Kun mkhyen,* and for that matter other honorific and hyperbolic terms, are not to be taken literally and are sometimes misemployed by Tibetan scholars through their love of panegyric, *Kun mkhyen* is nonetheless a prestigious epithet reserved for only a few exalted masters, impressive for their scholarship and meditative realization.

Another epithet the use of which indicates the social and religious stature of the person for whom it is used is *'Jam mgon* or *Mañju(śrī)nātha*. Mipham is among the very few scholars, including Sa skya Paṇḍita,

Tsong kha pa, mKhyen brtse'i dBang po (1820-92) and Kong sprul (1813-99), who are given this title of religious eminence. Likewise, Mipham is enumerated as one of "the Three *'Jam mgons* of Khams" (*Khams kyi 'jam mgon rnam gsum*),[9] the two others being his masters mKhyen brtse'i dBang po and Kong sprul. This title, which identifies the master for whom it is used with Mañjuśrī, the Buddha of Wisdom, is perhaps the most prestigious epithet available to signify the wisdom and scholarship of a master.

Gene Smith assumes the application of the title *'Jam mgon* to Mipham to have occurred after he had the vision of his personal deity, Mañjuśrī, during his eighteen month retreat in 'Ju nyung abbey propitiating Mañjuśrī.[10] Mipham often used as his pen name 'Jam dpal dGyes pa'i rDo rje, and sometimes, more pompously, 'Jam dpal dGyes pa'i rDo rje mTsho byung bZhad pa'i Rang mdangs. His other pen names, like Blo gros Dri med, Mati and Dhī, also suggest assertion of his own wisdom and learning.

With the dissemination of his philosophical writings, Mipham's reputation as a philosopher, hermeneutist and polemicist began to spread beyond the circles of rNying ma scholars by the middle of his academic life. It seems that in the initial stage of his popularity Mipham became notorious among the dGe lugs pas for his opposition to their interpretations. His opponents, including Hor Brag dkar sPrul sku bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags (1867-1910/11) and dPa' ri ba Blo bzang Rab gsal (1840-1910), initially portrayed him as an impertinent dissenter challenging the great dGe ldan pa doctrinal positions.[11]

mKhan po 'Jigs med Phun tshogs, a staunch follower of Mipham in modern Tibet, recounts in his biography of Mipham, *Sound of the Victorious Battle drum*,[12] how the monks of the three dGe lugs pa seats in central Tibet attempted to vanquish Mipham through sorcery and exorcisms. Mipham however triumphed unharmed through his spiritual powers and the sorcery and exorcism are said to have rebounded onto the performers themselves, bringing abnormal diseases and death. When the gNas chung oracle was consulted and the cause of the problems found, the thirteenth Dalai Lama sent emissaries to Mipham with apologies. Whether or not this account is credible, Mipham's fame and popularity continued to rise and even dGe lugs pa scholars came to admire and respect him. Despite his growing prestige, his opponent Brag dkar sPrul sku seems to have continued to regard him with contempt,[13] whereas dPa' ri Rab gsal not only acknowledged Mipham's scholarship but went to the extent of eulogizing it and referring to Mipham as Mañjuśrī.[14]

Like dPa' ri Rab gsal, scholars from all traditions began to appreciate Mipham as they came to know him better through the printing and propagation of his numerous works. Mipham however did not enjoy in his lifetime the same degree of respect and renown as he does now. By the middle of this century, the bKa' brgyud pa and Sa skya pa admiration of Mipham developed so far that they included Mipham's writings, such as his commentary on *Madhyamakālaṃkāra* and, *mKhas 'jug* in their academic syllabus. So far, gZhan dga' (1871-1927) is the only other rNying ma master whose works have been incorporated in the curricula of other traditions, although the reasons for including gZhan dga' and Mipham are quite different.[15] The use of prayers and ritualistic writings by Mipham in bKa' brgyud and Sa skya liturgies has now become common. The late rJe mKhan po dGe 'dun Rin chen, the supreme head of the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud school in Bhutan, for instance, was earnestly propagating Mipham's prayer for good auspices entitled *bKra shis brgyad pa*. The inclusion of a short supplication to Mañjuśrī by Mipham among the daily liturgies of dGa ldan, a chief dGe lugs pa monastery, is yet another unprecedented dimension in the influence of Mipham.

Let us now make a brief assessment of Mipham's position in the Tibetan religious world by comparing him to the great luminary Tsong kha pa. Both Tsong kha pa and Mipham are believed by their followers to be emanations of Buddhas and are known to have had visions of Mañjuśrī. Scholars in their own right, they have also made almost equal innovative contributions to the study of Buddhism in Tibet and have each pioneered a scholarly revival. However, Tsong kha pa was no parallel to Mipham in the range of his knowledge, or at least his writing, on diverse traditional sciences and arts, nor did he earn much authority and respect in other traditions. Perhaps, Tsong kha pa's lack of influence on other traditions is due to the general isolation of the dGe lugs pa tradition from the three other traditions, which enjoy much closer relations because of the affinity of their philosophical interpretations and practices.

On the other hand, Tsong kha pa occupies an unrivalled supremacy in his own tradition whereas Mipham, although highly esteemed, is but a secondary figure in his tradition, standing after prominent

masters like Padmasambhava (c. 8th century), Rong zom (c. 11th century), Klong chen pa, and sometimes even 'Jigs med Gling pa (1729-98). Although interest in Mipham is growing so rapidly that he is seen to represent the rNying ma pa on all fronts, and his predecessors are studied and understood through him, he will still occupy only a secondary place in the rNying ma lineage. Thus, the religious and scholarly stature of Mipham and Tsong kha pa, both resemble and differ from each other.

The following judgement of A mdo dGe 'dun Chos 'phel (1903-51)[16] gives a clear picture of the position of Mipham. When he was asked, who he thinks was more learned, Tsong kha pa or Mipham, he said:

> I thought this over several times. Both of them are equal in their mind for being emanations of the Buddha and in having visions of Mañjuśrī. If both were alive today and had a debate, Tsong kha pa would, I think, probably be wiser in debate, as he spent longer in dialectical centres. As for general sagacity, depth of understanding, style of exposition and so forth, Mipham is terrific. If others hear this, it may vex them. I am being serious.[17]

His popularity and influence in the Tibetan Buddhist world could also partly be ascribed to the appreciation and approbation he received from his teachers, 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po, Kong sprul Blo gros mTha' yas, dPal sprul O rgyan 'Jigs med Chos kyi dBang po (1808-87) and mKhan chen Padma Vajra (c. 1800), who were themselves highly esteemed lamas in their days. The first three enjoyed great faith and devotion from the adherents of gSar ma traditions as pioneers of the ecumenical (*ris med*) movement of which Mipham too is regarded as a promulgator. Notwithstanding the common assumption that he was an advocate of the ecumenical movement (*ris med pa*) which his teachers initiated, Mipham was a staunch proponent of rNying ma doctrine, and repeatedly refuted other schools igniting new doctrinal controversies. It still remains a perplexing question whether Mipham was a *ris med pa* in the same way as Kong sprul and dPal sprul.

The fact that mKhyen brtse'i dBang po encouraged and often instigated Mipham to write treatises that provoked his opponents into composing refutations is further bewildering. Nonetheless, mKhyen brtse'i dBang po and Mipham both stood for *ris med* and expressed this time and again in their words and deeds. mKhyen brtse'i dBang po's role and stance in the ecumenism he introduced will have to be studied separately, as it cannot be covered here. As for Mipham, it is clear that his idea of *ris med* is not of one uniform tradition for all Tibetan Buddhists but of a harmony with differences, a unity within diversity. He encouraged a *ris med* wherein all traditions adhere to their own doctrine and respect others. For him, sharp philosophical discussions and criticisms could go on, but in a friendly social atmosphere with mutual respect. This is the *ris med* attitude he adopted when he argued against such opponents as dPa' ri Blo bzang Rab gsal. One could probably say that his stature among the gSar ma pa and to some degree among rNying ma pas is a product of both his socially *ris med* approach and the polemical elements in his philosophical works.

Mipham's popularity among rNying ma pas, like his renown among adherents of other traditions, grew gradually. While on the one hand, those rNying ma pas inclined towards solitary practice and esoteric mantra received Mipham's *sūtra* and non-soteriological works and his growing influence with scepticism and indifference, the scholarly rNying ma pas, on the other, doubted the reliability of Mipham's new interpretations. One rNying ma scholar, rDo grub Dam chos, we are told, even openly challenged Mipham's interpretation of śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṃkāra*. This resulted in the writing of *Dam chos dogs sel*, one of the three polemical writings of Mipham.

Certain later rNying ma writers like mKhan po gZhan dga' and Ngag dga' (1879-1941) seem to have deliberately chosen to adhere to the better known interpretations of dGe lugs and Sa skya masters even after Mipham's new interpretations came to light. Some *mKhan pos* even argued that Mipham failed to grasp properly and present the real intentions (*dgongs pa*) of Rong zom and Klong chen Rab 'byams, major authorities in the rNying ma tradition. Thus, unlike masters such as the Dalai Lamas, Karmapas and some Treasure Discoverers, his society did not initially credit him with scholarly talent and spiritual qualities; he became an adept in his own right, earning his position through a series of impressive academic and religious performances.

However, one could also say that Mipham acquired an unquestionable seniority in the rNying ma hierarchy after his master, 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po, the then supreme pontiff of the rNying ma pas, invested him with the guardianship of the rNying ma doctrine by consigning to his care the entire corpus of rNying ma literature, including the *bKa' 'gyur* and *bsTan 'gyur* canons. mKhyen brtse'i dBang po conducted a special ceremony in which a huge pile of scriptures was placed before Mipham, who was made to sit on a raised seat, and was asked from then on to uphold those scriptures by exposition, debate and composition, and to propagate the Buddha's teachings throughout the world. During this ceremony, mKhyen brtse'i dBang po also conferred upon Mipham his own *paṇḍita* hat[18] and the title Mipham 'Jam dbyangs rNam rgyal rGya mtsho inscribed on a *thang ka* in poetic verse.[19] This unique enthronement was a milestone on Mipham's journey to general acceptance and authority within his own tradition.

Although Mipham was not formally recognized as a reincarnate master (*sprul sku*) or seen as a Treasure Discoverer (*gter ston*), his disciples regarded him as an emanation of Mañjuśrī. The recognition of his subsequent reincarnations is still going on in spite of the declaration in his last will that he would not reincarnate in the impure realm[20] any more.[21] His followers also later came to see him as a Treasure Discoverer and all his writings as Mind-Treasures bursting forth spontaneously in the form of treatises (*dgongs gter bstan bcos kyi tshul du rang rdol du byung ba*).[22] Mipham himself claims that his works, especially those on profound and sacred topics, were written when words, through the blessing of his deity and power of his realization, poured out spontaneously costing him no effort.[23] Mipham makes another very strong claim in his will when he says that he is not an ordinary being but a Bodhisattva who has taken birth through aspiration and prayers.[24]

Mipham received uncompromising support and recognition from his masters. His chief guru, mKhan brtse'i dBang po, as mentioned, entrusted him with the guardianship of the Buddha's teachings in general and rNying ma school in particular. He is also said to have remarked: "At the present time there is no one on the earth more learned than Lama Mipham".[25] Kong sprul Blo gros mTha' yas, another polymathic teacher of Mipham often called Mipham Mahāpaṇḍita and wrote a long-life prayer for Mipham addressing him as Mañjuśrī.[26]

When dPal sprul Rin po che was asked who was wiser, Mipham or himself, he replied: "In the field of *sūtra*, we are roughly equal. In [secret] mantra, there is a difference like that between open and closed eyes. Mipham is surely wiser".[27] All three of his masters, who were scholars of incredible erudition and adepts renowned for their lofty realization (*rtogs pa*), highly applauded his scholarship and associated him with Mañjuśrī. The recognition he received from his charismatic teachers must have helped him gain influence and respect among rNying ma pas as well as gSar ma pas.

Another minor asset for Mipham's quick ascent to renown could have been the royal patronage he enjoyed from the ruling sDe dge aristocratic family. Although Gene Smith and Steven Goodman assert that Mipham exercised real temporal authority over his aristocratic disciples[28] we do not exactly know as to how he had such political influence. Nevertheless, it is clear that he wielded strong spiritual authority by being the spiritual tutor of the sDe dge King Ngag dbang 'Jam dpal Rin chen (c. 1850-1920) and that perhaps may have brought him some prerogative in both social and political affairs. I shall not, however, discuss this here.

The Writings of Mipham

Mipham's writing career began quite early. Goodman, following Schuh's catalogue, tells us that the first datable text by Mipham is a single page prayer to Ge sar written on 20 August 1859.[29] Traditional scholars such as mKhan po 'Jigs med Phun tshogs have it that Mipham wrote his *Nges shes rin po che'i sgron me* (Precious Lamp of Certainty)[30] when he was seven years old for 'Ju Bla ma Rin chen mGon po (c. 1850-1920).[31] The book does not however have a proper colophon and is not datable. In his commentary on *Nges shes rin po che'i sgron me*, mKhan po Kun dpal (1872-1943), one of the well-known disciples of Mipham, provides us with a colophon written by Mipham when he was fifty-seven. In it, Mipham says:

> Although this *Nges shes rin po che'i sgron me* was written as it fortuitously came to my mind in one session when I was very young and a beginner in my studies, there is no contradiction in its

content and it holds pithy meaning. Therefore, I leave it as it is, without correction. This [colophon] is written by Mipham at [the age of] fifty-seven.[32]

John Pettit's conjecture that the text probably was written when Mipham was seventeen[33] seems to have no basis either.

From the middle of the 1860s, Mipham wrote intensively on many topics. Because he travelled from place to place, residing in different monasteries and hermitages, and gave away what he wrote to various people who asked for it, his works became widely scattered. Although his major works were published and disseminated quite quickly, many of his minor works remained in the hands of private people. The proper compilation of his writings took place after his demise, undertaken by Zhe chen rGyal tshab Padma rNam rgyal (1871-1926), mKhan po Kun dpal, Bla ma Zhing skyong (c. 1870-1940), and Kaḥ thog Si tu (1880-1925) who were Mipham's chief disciples.

The collection of Mipham's writings grew gradually to 18 volumes in the Chos mdzod Chen mo Archives at dPal ldan lHun grub steng, Derge, by the middle of the twentieth century. This did not however include several other works printed at Zhe chen, rDzogs chen, Kaḥ thog, A 'dzom Chos sgar, dPal 'byor sgang, Hor La dkar, dPal spungs and rDzong gsar. Some research has been done on the collecting, editing, and printing of Mipham's works by Gene Smith and Steven Goodman.[34]

Although mKhan po Kun dpal, in his catalogue of Mipham's writings, says that they occupy thirty-two volumes, corresponding to the thirty-two major marks of the Buddha, only twenty-seven volumes are in the edition reproduced by Zhe chen Monastery in Kathmandu, which is the largest collection so far available. Among them, some works like the *gNyug sems skor gsum* (Trilogy of Innate Mind) are compilations of his notes and discussions, while others, like his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra,* are developed from his annotations. Mipham's literary executors, as he advised, were very scrupulous in including those works whose authorship cannot be clearly attributed to Mipham. I shall now turn to survey his works contained in the Zhe chen redaction.

It is a typical Tibetan scholastic style to make a thematic categorization of scholarship, particularly written works, into two types: vast and profound. Although these two literary characteristics frequently overlap and could even form indispensable components of a single work, works that deal primarily with Emptiness are normally considered "profound writings" and those that focus on other topics "vast writings". Using this typology, I shall first look at Mipham's works on various other subjects and then focus on his writings on *Madhyamaka* philosophy.

The range of Mipham's "vast writings" includes arts, language, politics, astrology, medicine, yoga, divination, philosophy and religion. In traditional terms, he is a Mahāpaṇḍita, having mastered the ten sciences of arts and crafts (*bzo*), medicine (*gso ba*), language (*sgra*), logico-epistemology (*tshad ma*) and soteriology (*nang don*), poetry (*snyan ngag*), synonymy (*mngon brjod*), prosody (*sdeb sbyor*), dramaturgy (*zlos gar*) and astrology (*dkar rtsis*).

Under arts and crafts, mKhan po Kun dpal has catalogued five different works of Mipham written at the turn of the twentieth century. Four of these are iconometric works wherein Mipham talks in detail about geometry, mensuration and metrology essential for drawing, painting, casting and sculpting images of Buddhas and *maṇḍalas*. In his *gZo gnas nyer mkho'i za ma tog* (The Receptacle of Useful Crafts)[35] now published as a separate book, Mipham describes graphology, calligraphy, painting, sculpture, metallurgy, carpentry, pottery, jewellery, ornamentation, knitting, sewing, embroidery, and the art of making incense, ink, pens, colours, paints, paintbrushes, of dyeing, plating, decorating, alloying, carving, and of making herbal pills, fireworks, religious relics etc. Mipham displays great talent and expertise in all these subjects he wrote and was by no means a bragging charlatan. He treats even minor topics like the art of making inks, in depth and detail, discussing what kind of materials, containers, temperature and methods should be used to concoct different varieties of inks.

His contributions in medicine range from commentaries on the four-fold medicinal tantra (*rgyud bzhi*)[36] to minor pharmacological notes which were collected by his student, Doctor Karma dGa' ba'i dBang po of dPal spungs (c. 1870-1930). Covering all pathological, therapeutic and pharmacological aspects of

indigenous medicine, he wrote a few hundred works, of varying size, elucidating ancient theories and practices and contriving new formulae and methods. Even the concoction of aphrodisiac stimulants did not escape the creative mind of Mipham. He also took great interest in the synergy of medicine, physiotherapy and the recitation of powerful mantras. In the colophon of his medicinal works, Mipham refers to himself as a physician (*'tsho byed*), although we do not know whether he actually practised medicine. His works, as Gene Smith correctly states, continue to this day to be highly regarded. His synoptic presentation of indigenous medicine entitled *rTsa rgyud rdil gzhag gi 'grel pa* (Commentary on the Outline of the Root Tantra)[37] and his treatise on pulse-reading and urinalysis called *Phyi ma'i rgyud kyi rtsa mdo chu mdo'i 'grel pa* (Commentary on the Verses on Pulse-Reading and Urinalysis in the Later Tantra)[38] are two of the most comprehensive medical textbooks for beginners.

Mipham's knowledge of Sanskrit is another prodigious achievement given his lack of direct contact with the Indian world. He is said to have studied the *Cāndravyākaraṇasūtra* – Candragomin's book on Sanskrit grammar – with Kong sprul Blo gros mTha' yas. His most notable contribution in the study of Sanskrit is his Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary,[39] in which he introduces many Sanskrit rDzogs chen terms. There is also a collection of his annotations on the *Sārasvatīvyākaraṇasūtra*.[40] He also has to his credit commentaries on *Sum cu pa* (The Thirty Verses) and *rTags kyi 'jug pa,* (The Application of Genders)[41] the classic works on Tibetan language and grammar, and his popular treatise on the syntactical use of the second-suffix "*sa*".[42] Also within the linguistic field are a short work on semasiology,[43] many sporadic discussions of semantics in his philosophical writings, and a treatise on letter writing.[44]

Mipham's talent for prosody and poetry is evident in all his works. Apart from the breath-taking metaphors and rhetoric in his various writings, he authored a voluminous commentary on Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa*.[45] This commentary, as Gene Smith says, is the finest and most credible source for understanding the development of Tibetan poetics during the 18th and first half of the 19th century. Mipham wrote no works either on drama or on lexicology except for the bilingual lexicon I have mentioned earlier. However, he composed some songs and dances,[46] of which the *Gling gro*,[47] depicting Ge sar and his retinue of warriors, has now become a famous operatic performance among Tibetans.

The cult of Ge sar was one of Mipham's main interests and here he made a major contribution to folk tradition. He compiled and edited the multi-volume epic of Ge sar which until then existed solely in oral form learnt and recited only by a few public narrators. The epic, portraying Ge sar as a reincarnation of Padmasambhava in the form of a righteous king, describes his various triumphant invasions of the evil worlds, both human and non-human. It is probably the largest and most beautiful of folk poetry, as opposed to the poetry derived from Indian sources, and through it runs the theme of the destruction of evil, victory of the righteous and conversion of bad to good.

Although the legends surrounding Ge sar are shrouded in mystery and are not literally believed by all Tibetans, historians like Dudjom Rinpoche believed that Ge sar lived in the 11th century as a monarch based in the region of Gling. Mipham seems to have regarded Ge sar to have lived as a quasi-human figure and believed that Ge sar and his entourage are now divine spirits who are guardians of the Buddha's teachings (*dharmapāla, chos skyong*). Mipham not only adopted Ge sar as his private protector (*srung ma*), or *dgra lha* as he usually referred to him, but also introduced the practice of worshipping Ge sar as a guru and chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā, yi dam*). Many of his followers today continue the tradition of worshipping Ge sar as a *dgra lha*, who protects them from obstructions on their path to Buddhahood.

Beside compiling and editing the epic of Ge sar, he also wrote a whole cycle of liturgies comprising prayers, invocations, eulogies and manuals for executing sundry purposes through Ge sar. These include prayers and praises to Ge sar and his entourage and liturgies for offering them libations, incenses, feasts etc. There are also supplications requesting them to increase the charisma, wealth, power and fame of their devotees. Some prayers are directed to particular generals in Ge sar's entourage.

On astrology he wrote around a dozen works. His works in this field range from elementary mathematical calculations to foretelling eclipses and assessing the positions of the zodiac and stars. In his monumental two-volume commentary on *Kālacakralaghutantra*,[48] he presents one of the most refined and

intricate exposition on astronomical and astrological calculations, often shedding new light on crucial topics. He wrote a few hundred works on divination, oracles, geomancy, sorcery, magic and similar topics, including rituals and prayers for various purposes like *sang* and *sur* offerings.[49] It is unusual to find a serious logician and philosopher like Mipham displaying great enterprise in such cultural matters. His technique of divination using the root mantra *Arapacanadhī* of Mañjuśrī,[50] and the one using the arrow of Ge sar,[51] are two divination methods widely used by rNying ma pas these days.

In this category of study and practice, three large works of Mipham are outstanding. Corresponding to folk superstitions and beliefs, he wrote *gTo 'bum*,[52] a huge collection of diverse rituals and manuals for achieving different worldly purposes. Then, there is his *Kun gzigs dbyangs 'char chen mo*,[53] a work Mipham seems to have undertaken scrupulously, on the practice of divination based on vital air (*rlung*), zodiac positions (*khyim*) and syllables (*dbyangs gsal*). Like *dByangs 'char*, his *Srid pa 'phrul gyi 'ju thig*[54] is yet another prodigious work on divination; it mainly deals with an archaic *Bon* tradition of knot-sortilege.

It is fascinating to see, through this work, the degree of Mipham's interest in and knowledge of Bon, Tibet's indigenous faith. Perhaps this voluminous work, to which he devoted much effort and time, reading more than a score of Bon po works, and his work on the art of love-making, *'Dod pa'i bstan bcos 'jig rten kun tu dga' ba'i gter* (Treatise on Love: Treasure of Worldly Pleasure),[55] are the two works that best reflect Mipham's open-mindedness and versatility. In the case of the latter, he was the first of two Tibetans to compose such a work, although A mdo dGe 'dun Chos 'phel, the other author to write on this topic, jocularly dismissed Mipham's piece as less efficient because it was written without any practical experience.[56]

Mipham's cultural works also include what his cataloguer called *brTag pa thor bu* (Miscellaneous Investigations).[57] These investigations contain Mipham's study and interpretation of geomantic signs, zodiac signs, butter-lamp signs, signs of sacrificial fire, signs of spiritual accomplishments, and analysis of good and bad skulls used for religious rituals and of varieties of jewels. He also wrote on the verification of genuine and spurious Treasure-Discoverers (*gter ston*).[58] On magic, he wrote two works, *sGyu ma'i be bum* and *sNgags kyi be bum*, both of which are considered strictly esoteric and thus deliberately kept out of the Zhechen redaction. The latter has appeared in book format from Xining.[59]

Mipham authored no less than one hundred eulogies and supplications which by traditional classification fall under the *bstod tshogs* or hymnic genre. Within this corpus is his remarkable invocation to the Buddha śākyamuni, *Thub chog byin rlabs gter mdzod* (Liturgies [to supplicate] the Sage: Treasury of Blessings)[60] and the grand exposition of the Buddha's lives entitled *Padma dkar po* (The White Lotus),[61] the latter being an exegesis supplementary to the former. He wrote similar invocations to the Eight Bodhisattvas (*nye sras brgyad*) along with supplementary narratives of their lives.[62] Mipham is also said to have compiled the catalogues to the publication of the *mDzod bdun* of Klong chen pa, to the writings of Rong zom, to dPal sprul's works and to the archival collection of Kaḥ thog sKu 'bum.

In the *gtam tshogs* or homiletic genre (*zhal gdams skor*),[63] Mipham wrote over two dozen advisory epistles and essays addressed to monks, yogis, scholars, rulers, villagers, monastic and lay communities. Some were written for particular individuals who requested instruction from him whereas others were written for a general readership. Among these is his political counsel on kingship, *rGyal po lugs kyi bstan bcos sa gzhi skyong ba'i rgyan* (Treatise on Kingship: Ornament of Earth Rulers)[64] written for the King of sDe dge.

Mipham's high regard for logic and epistemology is extraordinary in a rNying ma master. Most rNying ma pas lack interest in and are even averse to logic and epistemology; Mipham professed great love of the subject. It is perhaps under the influence of Rong zom, who was a great enthusiast for logic and language, and Klong chen pa, a scholar with a strong sense of rationality, that Mipham acquired his love of rationality and reasoning. Whatever the cause may be, Mipham is an exceptional case among rNying ma pas in presenting Buddhist philosophy and soteriology with acute and elaborate reasoning and logic.

He wrote commentaries on both the *Pramāṇavārttika*[65] and the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*,[66] in which he put forward new ideas and interpretations. However, Mipham's position, on the whole, is close to the Sa skya lineage of the logico-epistemological traditions, and he also wrote a commentary on Sa paṇ's *Tshad ma rigs*

gter.[67] Among his works on logic is the *Bsdus tshan smra ba'i sgo 'byed* (A Compendium that Opens the Door of Speech)[68] a compendium of satirical but intricate logical arguments primarily intended to make fun of dGe lugs pa sophistry.

Within the logico-epistemological and philosophical works are his contributions to hermeneutics. We can fully appreciate Mipham's hermeneutic dexterity only by reading his commentaries on major philosophical treatises and the two sets of short but interesting quintets he wrote and entitled *Swords* and *Lilies.*[69] So far none of these has been studied by western scholars except for *Don rnam nges shes rab ral gri* (The Sword of Wisdom that Ascertains Meaning), one of the five *Swords*, of which Mathew Kapstein has made a paraphrastic presentation.[70] An English translation of mKhan po dPal ldan Shes rab's commentary on the same text is put on the Web.[71]

Generally speaking, most of Mipham's literary output could be linked to a soteriological purpose, while over half of it directly deals with Buddhist philosophy and soteriology. Among the Five Scriptural Texts (*gzhung bka' pod lnga*) popular in the Tibetan academia, Mipham has written least on *vinaya.* He has to his credit a commentary on the *Prātimokṣasūtra,*[72] the *ǒryamūlasarvāstivādiśrāmaṇerakārikā,*[73] and the *Upāsakasaṃvarāṣṭaka.*[74] Similarly, of the Thirteen Great Texts (*gzhung chen bcu gsum*) known among rNying ma, bKa' brgyud and Sa skya scholarly circles, Mipham did not write a commentary on the *Vinayasūtra* of Guṇaprabha and on one other text, the *Catuḥśataka* of Āryadeva. Does writing less on *vinaya* in any way reflect Mipham's lack of interest in monastic practice, as is the case with some rNying ma masters? We have no record either of Mipham's being ordained as a proper monk. I will not, however, delve into this question here.

On Abhidharma, Mipham wrote an expansive commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa*[75] and a glossarial exegesis on the *Abhidharmasamuccaya.*[76] He also commented on Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasaṅgraha,*[77] Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti,*[78] *Triṃśikā*[79] and *Viṃśatikā.*[80] On Buddhist phenomenology and metaphysics, his treatise, *mKhas pa'i tshul la 'jug pa'i sgo* (Entering the Ways of the Wise) with its outline (*sa bcad*) and verse summary (*sdom byang*), [81] is one of the most comprehensive books and is much studied in the three non-dGe lugs pa schools. This and his outline of the *Abhidharmakośa* both reflect Mipham's skill in organizing the structure of his works. Steven Goodman and Leslie Kawamura have done a synoptic analysis of Mipham's *mKhas 'jug,*[82] and a volume of English translation of the same by Eric Pema Kunsang and another by Richard Barrons have come out.[83]

Of the five works of Maitreya, Mipham wrote quite detailed commentaries on three, but on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and the *Mahāyānottaratantra,* otherwise known as the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, there are only commentaries later compiled from his annotations by his students.[84] His commentaries on the *Sūtrālaṇkāra*, entitled *Theg mchog bdud rtsi'i dga' ston* (The Feast of the Nectar of the Supreme Vehicle),[85] on the *Madhyāntavibhaṅga* called *'Od zer phreng ba* (The Garland of Rays)[86] and on *the Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, called *Ye shes snang ba rnam 'byed* (Discriminating the Light of Pristine Wisdom),[87] are very fine works; the first two, specially, are excellent sources for his understanding of *Cittamātra* philosophy.

Of the five, Mipham seems to have considered the *Madhyāntavibhaṅga* and *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* to encompass all Mahāyāna schools, unlike *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and *Mahāyānottaratantra,* which he considered to be Mādhyamika in content, and the *Sūtrālaṅkāra* which he considered to be Cittamātra. In addition to his commentary on the *Mahāyānottaratantra*, he wrote two supplementary works on Buddha Nature called *bDe gshegs snying po'i stong thun senge'i nga ro*, (Exposition on *Tathāgatagarbha*: Lion's Roar)[88] wherein he discusses the three arguments Maitreya used to establish that Buddha Nature pervades in all sentient beings, and *gZhan stong khas len sen ge'i nga ro* (Assertion of the Emptiness of Other: Lion's Roar)[89] a text written in defence of the exposition of the Emptiness of Other. I shall return to say more on this in the next section when I discuss his works on *Madhyamaka.*

Like other Tibetan masters, Mipham emphasized *śāstras* and did not write much directly on the canonical *sūtras*. There are only four commentaries on the *sūtras*: on the *Prātimokṣasūtra,*[90] I mentioned earlier, on the *Āryaratnatrayānusmṛtisūtra,*[91] on the *Prajñāpāramitāsamuccayagāthā*[92] and an annotation of

the *Bhadracaripraṇidhāna*.[93] On the *Sañcayagāthā*, he wrote a second exegesis in the *shan byar* genre,[94] by juxtaposing and collating this *sūtra* and Maitreya's *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*. Among other miscellaneous works on *sūtrayāna* are his commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Suhṛllekha*,[95] which has been translated into English in Leslie Kawamura's *Golden Zephyr*,[96] his *Yid bzhin mdzod grub bsdus* (Compendium of Tenet Systems [presented] in the Treasury of Wish-fulfilling Jewels)[97] extracted from the twelfth chapter of Klong chen pa's *Yid bzhin rin po che'i mdzod* (Treasury of Wish-fulfilling Jewels)[98] and his essay on establishing the three vows to be of a single nature.[99]

His output in subjects related to the *vajrayāna* system is massive, comprising around seven hundred works of varying size. Besides writing new philosophical treatises and commentaries to the existing ones, he composed hundreds of accomplishment practices, invocations, meditation manuals, and liturgies for empowerment, consecration, and numerous other purposes. He dealt with all the four schools of tantras – *kriyā, caryā, yoga* and *yogottaratantra* – or the six mantra vehicles of *kriyā, caryā, yoga, mahāyoga, anuyoga* and *atiyoga* according to the rNying ma tantric taxonomy.

Among the scores of deities he dealt with, Mipham apparently wrote most on practices based on multiple forms of Mañjuśrī, his tutelary deity. His cycle of Mañjuśrī worship contains eulogies, prayers, invocations, accomplishment manuals, meditation instructions, and liturgies for bestowing empowerments, performing divination, sorcery, magic, oracles, exorcism, and consecration, making offerings and even making blessed pills, amulets, etc.

A notable feature of Mipham's contribution on *vajrayāna* is his interest and erudition in what are categorised as *gSar ma* or New Tantras. Unlike many rNying ma masters, who were satisfied with the rNying ma tantras translated during the Earlier Translation (*snga 'gyur*) undertaken at the time of first propagation of Buddhism into Tibet under Dharma King Khri srong lDe btsan and Padmasambhava, Mipham actively studied and wrote prolifically on the gSar ma tantras, which were translated during the Later Translation (*phyi 'gyur*) period, which was part of the second dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet.

Among his works on gSar ma tantras are his numerous accomplishment manuals (*sgrub thabs*) and liturgical compositions on the *Bhairava, Hevajra, Vajrayoginī, Guhyasamāja, Cakrasaṃvara* and *Kālacakra* practices. On the last one, Mipham produced one of the finest commentarial exegeses on the *Laghutantra*[100] and, in addition to the two thick volumes of commentary, another volume of liturgical writings and diverse essays.[101] Time and again Mipham praised the effectiveness and profundity of the *Kālacakra* cycle and reaffirmed its superiority over other tantras,[102] or at least over other gSar ma tantras. He also wrote two works on the *Pañcakrama* (*Rim lnga*) of the *Guhyasamāja* cycle.[103]

If Mipham treated the gSar ma teachings with deep interest, he certainly could be said to have undertaken the study of and writing on rNying ma doctrine with zeal and zest. He is said to have remarked that the gSar ma works are easy to understand and immediately convincing whereas rNying ma teachings, on the contrary, are abstruse and obscure but pithy and profound, requiring to be unravelled gradually.[104] Mipham wrote profusely on rNying ma tantras. Of the two, *bKa' ma* and *gTer ma*, it is curious that Mipham, apart from his scrutiny of authentic and spurious *gter ston*s, did not discuss *gTer ma*[105] much, compared to the bulk of work he did on *bKa' ma*.[106] Although he was closely connected to great *gTer ston*s like 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po and Kong sprul Blo gros mTha' yas, and despite the compilation of *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo* happening in his day, Mipham seems to show little interest in any *gTer ma* cycle.

Amongst his important compositions on rNying ma tantric scholarship, his exegetical, liturgical and instructional writings on bKa' brgyad[107] are outstanding contributions to the *sgrub sde* section of Mahāyogatantra. Likewise, his *gSang snying spyi don 'od gsal snying po* (The Essence of Clear Light: An Exegesis on *Guhyagarbhatantra*),[108] among several others, is a remarkable contribution to the *rgyud sde* category of *Mahāyoga* literature, although in it he interpreted the *Guhyagarbhatantra* in the light of the *Atiyoga* tradition.

He has also written supplementary works to Klong chen pa's *Yid bzhin rin po che'i mdzod*[109] and commentaries on Padmasambhava's *Man ngag lta phreng*,[110] Huṅkāra's *Saṃsiddhimahāśrīherukanopika*,[111] Mañjuśrīmitra's *Bodhicittabhāvanopalasuvarṇadruta*,[112] Saraha's *Dohakośagīti*,[113] Pad ma dBang rgyal's

sDom gsum rnam nges,[114] on the *Dhyānottaratantra,*[115] *Tshig bdun gsol 'debs,*[116] *rGyud lung man ngag gi bshags pa*[117] and other tantric treatises, some of which could be considered to be his work on *anuyogātantra*, the second inner tantric vehicle in rNying ma tradition. There are also his prayers, invocations, *guru yoga* practices directed to many saints and yogis of India and Tibet and liturgies for supplicating and for offering feasts, libations, incense etc. to different deities and dharma-protectors. He also authored around fifteen works which his cataloguer classifies as benedictory and dedicatory prayers.

Foremost among his contributions are his quintessential writings on rDzogs chen thought and practice. He wrote a few exegetical works and many practical instructions, which were published as his distinctive writings on *rDzogs chen* at rDzong sar monastery.[118] A similar collection was also reproduced as a book at Sarnath.[119] Apart from his independent texts on *rDzogs chen*, he also gave ample thematic treatment to *rDzogs chen* philosophy and meditation in many other works, especially in those on *Madhyamaka*.

His writings on *rDzogs chen*, like Klong chen pa's but unlike 'Jigs med Gling pa's poetic presentation, are pithy and abstruse, often encrypted in *rDzogs chen* terminology, and, like Rong zom's, firmly grounded on philosophical reasoning. One could claim that Mipham undertook all his work on soteriology and philosophy in the spirit of mastering *rDzogs chen* thought, for *rDzogs chen* was to him, as to other rNying ma pas, the *summum bonum* of all teachings and practices. If anything made him a staunch adherent of rNying ma school, it was the *rDzogs chen,* and it was mainly to fulfil this end of perfecting Great Perfection that Mipham expounded *Madhyamaka* philosophy extensively. I shall now turn to survey his works on *Madhyamaka*, the "profound writings".

The Madhyamaka Writings

Of all his writings, his writings on *Madhyamaka* thought attracted the most attention from other scholars and bought popularity and fame in religious and scholarly circles. It is on this subject, among the numerous subjects he covered, that Mipham showed the most enthusiasm and vigour, and came up with much novelty and also dissent. Both the popularity of the subject in Tibet and the innovative but controversial nature of his writings contributed towards making his works on *Madhyamaka* distinctive and famous.

Perhaps the earliest work that Mipham wrote on *Madhyamaka* is his *Nges shes rin po che'i sgron me*,[120] which as mentioned earlier, was written at an initial period of his advanced training. John Pettit has recently done his Ph.D. thesis on this text, providing an insightful account of Mipham's position in *Madhyamaka* thought as presented in this text.[121] He has also produced an English translation of this and its commentary, *rNam bshad 'od zer dri med* (Exegesis [called] the Stainless Rays) by Khro shul 'Jam rDor (1920-60).[122] In this text, Mipham portrays himself as a judicious sage to whom a wandering mendicant poses seven crucial questions relating to *Madhyamaka*.

Through giving answers to the seven queries, he expounds various aspects of *Madhyamaka* philosophy, and explicates the crux of it, especially while answering the first question, whether Emptiness is strong or weak negation (*lta ba dgag gnyis gang ltar smra*), and the last question, whether or not there is assertion in the Mādhyamika system (*dbu mar khas lan yod dam med*). The coherence and consistency with which he provides answers to these questions, thereby elucidating the rNying ma doctrinal position, gives us an impressive picture of Mipham's erudition even at that early stage of his scholarship.

However, we see Mipham's exposition of *Madhyamaka* growing more elaborate, profound and rigorous in his commentary on the *Madhyamakālaṅkāra* of śāntarakṣita,[123] written when he was thirty-one. At the behest of his chief master, 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse dBang po, he composed, within only twenty-one days, a stupendous exegesis on this *Madhyamaka* text, previously to a great extent neglected by Tibetan scholars. In his detailed commentary on the main body of the text and the extensive, systematic introduction he wrote to the commentary, he formulated the rNying ma doctrinal position corresponding to both the Svātantrika and the Prāsaṅgika traditions of Mādhyamika. For posterity, this commentary was to become his most authoritative work on subjects relating to *Madhyamaka* studies and the most important source for his interpretation of several controversial topics. Kennard Lipman has done his dissertation on this.[124]

Connected to this work is Mipham's short polemic entitled *Dam chos dwogs sel* (Clarification of Doubts of Damchos),[125] written at the request of rDo ba Dam chos, a rNying ma scholar who at first seems even to have challenged Mipham to a public debate. In 1878, two years after his commentary on the *Madhyamakālaṃkāra,* Mipham wrote *Sher le'u 'grel pa nor bu ketaka* (Commentary on Wisdom Chapter: the Ketaka Gem),[126] his exposition on the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of śāntideva, which, in the years to come, was to provoke several controversies and polemical discussions. This commentary, as Gene Smith has correctly said, turned into a tempest that triggered an intellectual commotion in dGe lugs pa circles.[127]

The dGe lugs pas retaliated by sending him several refutations of his work, which subsequently led to the writing of his two other polemical works, *Rigs lam rab gsal de nyid snang byed* (The Clear Logic that Illuminates the Reality),[128] written in reply to the refutation of dPa' ri ba Blo bzang Rab gsal, and *rGal lan nyin byed snang ba* (Reply to a Refutation: The Light of the Sun)[129] to Brag dkar sPrul sku Blo bzang dPal ldan bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags. These three works and three subsequent polemical texts embody almost the entire contributions of Mipham in *Madhyamaka* philosophy and thus form the *magna opera* of Mipham's writings on *Madhyamaka.*

Major issues on which Mipham shed new light in these works are: the nature of Emptiness, its knowability and inexpressibility, the definition of the two truths, classification of the ultimate truth, the dual system of the two truth theory, differences between Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika sub-schools, the Mādhyamika stance on reflexive awareness and store-consciousness, the process of discarding the two obscurations, the degree of realization of Selflessness by śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas, the Prāsaṅgika position in making assertions, the mode of reasoning and meditation on Emptiness, the validity of convention and the scrutiny of shared appearance (*mthun snang*) among the six realms of beings. Paul Williams, in his book *The Reflexive Nature of Awareness*,[130] has done an elaborate study of Mipham's Mādhyamika stance on reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana, rang rig*) and a Franz-Karl Ehrhard has written on Mipham's theory of assertions in Prāsaṅgika school.[131]

Mipham covered in these texts philosophical, soteriological, gnoseological and ontological issues that most writers on *Madhyamaka* would deal within commentaries on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* or Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā.* One often wonders why Mipham, apart from his annotations that his students later compiled for us,[132] did not write a proper commentary on those two, but wrote on *Madhyamakālaṅkāra.* Could this be because of his greater faith in śāntarakṣita, as he was a rNying ma master? Similarly, he did not write an extensive commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and *Mahāyānottaratantra,* as did other masters, but wrote on other works of Maitreya. Perhaps, Mipham was deliberately avoiding comment on those popular texts that already had a great deal of scholarly work done on them, and was trying to bring some less known works to light. Or was Mipham trying to avoid the risk of more controversy, which would be inevitable if he undertook elaborate exposition on those books that are widely studied in Tibetan monasteries?

One important characteristic of Mipham's writing is his ecumenical spirit of reconciliation. Although his controversial contributions and the related polemics make him appear disputatious and provocative, Mipham was a master who fervently sought to reconcile and respect all conflicting views and systems. It was his liberal approach, interpreting dissonant teachings so as to bring them into harmony, which often annoyed and provoked opposition from orthodox groups. His effort to bring dichotomic systems, such as the Profound tradition of Nāgārjuna (*Klu sgrub kyi zab mo lta srol*) and the Extensive tradition of Asaṅga (*Thogs med kyi rgya chen spyod srol*), the *Svātantrika* and *Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka*, *sūtrayāna* and *vajrayāna,* the *gSar ma* and *rNying ma* and even Tsong kha pa and his opponents, into agreement is evident in his *Madhyamaka* works.

Besides, Mipham respected every Buddhist tradition and its masters and even accepted their spiritual and doctrinal authority, notwithstanding his philosophical disagreements with his opponents. A salient example is Mipham's devotion to Tsong kha pa and some other dGe lugs pa masters, despite the fact that many of his polemical writings are refutations of Tsong kha pa's interpretation and dGe lugs pa understanding of Emptiness. He repeatedly stated that Tsong kha pa and other eminent dGe lugs pa masters

like lCang skya Rol pa'i rDo rje (1717-1786) held views consonant with the rNying ma pa and other sNga rabs pa[133] viewpoints, although they taught a provisional understanding of Emptiness that their followers, the dGe lugs pas, mistook for definitive and final.

A strong testimony to Mipham's ecumenical outlook is that he even wrote commentaries on Tsong kha pa's *Lam gtso rnam gsum* (Three Principal Practices)[134] and lCang sKya's *lTa mgur* (Hymn on the Experience of Emptiness).[135] In the same way, he wrote a short article defending the Sa skya pa philosophical position in answer to twelve pivotal questions posed to the Sa skya pas[136] and he wrote his *gZhan stong khas len senge'i nga ro* to justify the view of the Emptiness of Other (*gzhan stong*) although he himself adhered to the concept of the Emptiness of Own-being (*rang stong*).

Now to turn to his doctrine on *Tathāgatagarbha*, Mipham touches on the concept of *Tathāgatagarbha* in the above mentioned works, although it is his commentary on the *Mahāyānottaratantra*, and the supplementary writings, *bDe gshegs snying po'i stong thun senge'i nga ro*[137] and *gZhan ston khas len senge'i nga ro,*[138] which deal with this topic in depth and detail. Towards the end of his life, Mipham also composed three other works on *Tathāgatagarbha* and Innate Mind (*gnyug sems*), called the Trilogy on Innate Mind.[139] Unfortunately, Mipham did not live long enough to see a formal completion of this trilogy; his student, Zhe chen rGyal tshab Pad ma rNam rgyal, finished it by augmenting miscellaneous notes by Mipham on the same theme and published it at Zhe chen monastery. In this trilogy, he bridges the *Tathāgatagarbha* in *sūtrayāna* and the Innate Mind in *vajrayāna* and goes on to show how this concept is fundamental and crucial to Mahāyāna philosophy and practice irrespective of what terms are used for it in different schools and vehicles. This, one could say, is one of his last attempts to harmonize not only the *sūtra* and *tantra* schools in their basic theory and ultimate goal but the positions of various Buddhist traditions and schools with respect to *Tathāgatagarbha.*

Other works of Mipham on *Madhyamaka* include his commentaries on Nāgārjuna's *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdaya*[140] and *Hastavāla*[141] and śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra,*[142] although the last two are not included in the Zhechen Monastery edition of his writings. Mipham did not write anything on Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka,* one of the major treatises of *Madhyamaka* in Tibet, but he wrote a commentary on the *Jñānasārasamuccaya,*[143] believed to be by the same Āryadeva. Katsumi Mimaki has written an article on this in French.[144] Mipham wrote around half a dozen practical instructions for meditation on *Madhyamaka,* of which two have been rendered into English in the book, *Calm and Clear,*[145] published by the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center.

His student gZhan phan Chos kyi Blo gros (c. 1890-1960) compiled his miscellaneous notes on *Madhyamaka* philosophy and created a collection entitled *dBu ma sogs gzhung spyi'i dka' gnad skor gyi gsung gros sna tsogs phyogs gcig tu bsdus pa rin po che'i za ma tog* (Collection of Diverse Discussions on *Madhyamaka* and Other Difficult Doctrinal Topics: the Vessel of Jewels).[146] Most of notes in this and in his annotation of *Mādhyamakāvatāra* are refutations of the dGe lugs pa understanding of Emptiness as lack of inherent nature and the phrase "vase is not empty of vase but of hypostatic existence". It is also in this text where he categorically claims to be a proponent of *rang stong* philosophy, introduces the terms, *kun rdzob gzhan stong* and *don dam gzhan stong*, which in his *Nges shes sgron me,* he calls *tshig gi gzhan stong* and *don gi gzhan stong,* and accuses the dGe lugs pas of espousing the first type of *gzhan stong*.

One of Mipham's last wishes was to write another extensive exegetical work on *Madhyamaka.* This wish however was not fulfilled, due to his physical deterioration and because of the number of pending works to be completed. From the nature of his works and the degree of his emphasis, it is clear that *Madhyamaka* was for Mipham a profound and crucial subject, deserving more attention than any other in the *sūtrayāna.* The correct understanding of *Madhyamaka qua* Emptiness was not only an indispensable soteriological factor in itself but a direct link to the knowledge of rDzogs chen. In many of his works, Mipham stressed this connection between rDzogs chen and *Madhyamaka* and went so far to deny that one could master rDzogs chen without adequate knowledge of *Madhyamaka*.

In his *Nges shes sgron me*, he says: "In order to scrutinize thoroughly the Primordial Purity,[147] one has to perfect the view of Prāsaṅgika,"[148] and also in his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, he states: "The

Great Perfection [view], which realizes the equality of appearance and emptiness, could be seen only by means of the excellent treatises of Nāgārjuna."[149]

This was a bold claim for him to make, especially as a rNying ma pa, because many yogic rNying ma pas in his milieu regarded themselves as rDzogs chen adepts although they were not really versed in *Madhyamaka* philosophy. More disconcerting to such rNying ma pas was his opinion that full knowledge of *Madhyamaka* can be gained only in the light of sufficient *pramāṇa* understanding. Like the dGe lugs pas, Mipham argued that knowing *pramāṇa* concepts is a prerequisite for mastering *Madhyamaka* philosophical theories and propositions.

In his commentary on the *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*, he stated that śāntarakṣita's text was particularly meant for a Mādhyamika who has a strong interest in and taste for *pramāṇa*. In the same text, he introduced the concept of *dbu tshad sen ge mjing bsnol*, the coalition of *Madhyamaka* principle and *pramāṇa* logic, represented by two lions intertwining their necks to guard each other. Thus, Mipham revolutionized rNying ma scholarship by not only encouraging philosophical learning and exposition but by emphasizing the rational, analytical and zetetic approach of learning and pedagogy.

Through his writings on *Madhyamaka*, of all his contributions, he left for future rNying ma pas what they could consider as assertions of their own tradition (*rang lugs kyi 'dod pa*) or philosophical boundaries to hold (*gzhung gi 'dzin mtshams*). In this respect, Mipham fulfilled his goal in writing commentaries, for it was partly to make the rNying ma pas, who were then heavily dependent on other traditions, self-reliant in their doctrinal field that Mipham undertook the writing of his works. He repeatedly admonishes the rNying ma pas to stop relying on other schools for philosophical and doctrinal positions while so much goodness is treasured in the rNying ma tradition itself. With this message, he encourages the rNying ma pas and for that matter any other scholars and practitioners to develop twofold certainties in the teachings: a certainty through which one need not rely on others anymore (*gzhan dring mi 'jog pa'i nges shes*) and a certainty which cannot be invalidated by others anymore (*gzhan gyis mi 'phrogs pa'i nges shes*). These dual certainties form a common theme in many of his works.

Mipham's output in *Madhyamaka* redefined, for the rNying ma pas, their perspective on *Madhyamaka* scholarship and their scholastic modalities by pointing out both strengths and weaknesses, while it proved a stimulus for other traditions of Tibetan Buddhism to reassess and reconstruct their doctrinal positions. For general Tibetan scholarship, it rejuvenated the long history of polemical debate and thereby gave fresh life to the study of *Madhyamaka* in Tibet.

Conclusion

If we look at the massive collection of his writings, it appears as though Mipham can have done nothing but spend his entire life writing books. Yet, according to his colophons, Mipham wrote most of his works only during the intervals of his teaching sessions or meditation retreats, the two activities that occupied him most. Thus, it is not just the depth and amount of what he knew that amaze people, but the speed at which he mastered and composed that make him a distinguished prodigy.

His polymathy, although extremely diverse, was never short of intellectual acumen, and the socially ecumenical outlook he professed did not undermine his philosophically critical approach. With a strong soteriological conviction and devotion to meditation, he could still pursue his interests in what his tradition would consider profane sciences. He instigated doctrinal dissension and yet was respected for the conciliatory movement of which he was a prominent leader. He was open minded, abiding strictly by reason and logic, and yet he adhered to his own tradition with fervent faith.

Mipham was and still is a personal enigma, whose fascinating life and works deserve much more careful study and research. He is *sui generis*. To his followers, he is just another Mañjuśrī, the Bodhisattva who comes now and then to help the ignorant and the scholarly, but for the wider world, I suppose, he is a "renaissance man" to a degree rarely seen in history.

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Notes

1. *Dag snang* (lit. pure visions) and *dgongs gter* (lit. mind treasures) are revelations known primarily in the rNying ma school of Tibetan Buddhism. They form a large section of the *gTer ma* cycle, the corpus of rediscovered teachings believed to be hidden for safety by Padmasambhava and his disciples in the 8th century. Although *dag snang* and *dgongs gter* were not unknown before, both began to thrive intensely in the 18th and 19th century through visionaries like 'Jigs med Gling pa and 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po.
2. *Ris med* or the Ecumenical movement was started in the nineteenth century by the luminaries, 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dBang po and Kong sprul Blo gros mTha' yas in order to reconcile the differing Buddhist schools which have brought decades of strife in Tibet. Since then, this movement spread widely. H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama is perhaps the strongest promulgator of this movement today.
3. E. Gene Smith, (1969), p. 6.
4. Steven D. Goodman, (1981), pp. 58-78.
5. John W. Pettit, (1998): "Theory, Practice and Ultimate Reality in the Thought of Mipham Rinpoche" (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia Univ.,), pp. 32-64; John W. Pettit, "The Life and Works of Mipham Rinpoche" at website: http://www.hvinet.com/jwp/Miphambio.html. See also John W. Pettit, (1999).
6. Dieter Schuh, (1973): *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke,* Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, vol. XI 5.
7. Bo dong Paṇ chen Phyogs las rNam rgyal is credited with around hundred and fifty volumes of work. The works, grouped into four *De nyid bsdus pa*s (Compendiums on Reality), are mostly compilations of the works of his predecessors.
8. Giving titles like *Kun mkhyen, Kun gzigs* and *Thams cad mkhyen pa* to a particular master normally happens only within his own tradition and may not be acceptable to the adherents of other traditions. However, certain masters of established scholarly renown are accorded the title even beyond their own tradition. In the case of Mipham, although the practice of addressing him as *Kun mkhyen* may be common only among his followers, it is not totally unacceptable to others to call him *Kun mkhyen*. Even dGe lugs pas would perhaps agree that Mipham is a *Kun mkhyen* as much as 'Jam dbyangs bZhad pa is.
9. I credit Alak Zengkar Rinpoche for this information.

10. E. Gene Smith, (1969), p. 5.
11. dPa' ri Blo bzang Rab gsal, (1991): "'Jam dpal dbyangs kyi dgongs rgyan rigs pa'i gzi 'bar gdong lnga'i sgra dbyangs", *Yongs rdzogs bstan pa'i mnga' bdag sudhīsara'i gsung 'bum,* Beijing: National Centre for Tibetan Studies Press, p. 356; Brag sprul bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags, *Zab mo dbu ma'i gnad cung zad brjod pa blo gsal dga' ba'i gtam zhes bya mi pham rnam rgyal la klan ka gyis pa dang po* (Works of Brag dkar sPrul sku bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags, copy in IsMEO, Rome, vol. Ca, 274/5); See also MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 195-7.
12. 'Jigs med Phun tshogs, *Kun mkhyen Mi pham rgya mtsho la gsol ba 'debs tshul g.yul las rnam par rgyal ba'i rnga sgra* (n.p. n.d.)
13. Brag dkar sPrul sku wrote two other works to refute Mipham's reply to his first refutation. *'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal gyis 'dod tshul la klan ka bgyis pa zab mo'i gtam* (Works of Brag sprul bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags, copy in IsMEO, Rome, vol. Ca, 274/6) and *Mi pham rnam rgyal gyis rtsod pa'i yang lan log lta'i khong khrag 'don pa'i skyug sman* (Works of Brag dkar sPrul sku bsTan 'dzin sNyan grags, copy in IsMEO, Rome, vol. Ca, 274/7).
14. dPa' ri Blo bzang Rab gsal, (1991): "Rigs 'phrul spyid kyi pho nya", *Yongs rdzogs bstan pa'i mnga' bdag sudhīsara'i gsung 'bum,* Beijing: National Centre for Tibetan Studies Press, pp. 350-353; Kun bzang Chos grags, (1987), pp. 646-7; See also MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 463-64. Mipham and dPa' ri Rab gsal later became good friends, who frequently wrote and visited each other.
15. Mipham's works were studied in bKa' brgyud and Sa skya institutions mainly for his dextrous style of presentation, consistent arguments or for providing deeper insight. gZhan dga' is studied because his commentaries are mainly compilations of original Indian glosses and annotations, which are considered unaffected by linear Tibetan interpretations and thus accepted by all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.
16. A mdo dGe 'dun Chos 'phel, a scholar of great brilliance, was a rNying ma reincarnate educated in the dGe lugs pa centre of 'Bras spungs. He had great respect and faith in Tsong kha pa although his polemical work on *Madhyamaka* made him infamous among dGe lugs pa scholars.
17. Shes rab rGya mtsho, (1988): "A mdo ba dge 'dun chos 'phel gyi mdzad rnam", *dGe 'dun chos 'phel gyi gsung rtsom,* Bir: Dzongsar Shedra, vol ii, p. 378: go de ngas bsam blo mang po mang po btang rgyu byung / khong gnyis thugs sangs rgyas kyi rnam 'phrul la 'jam dpal zhal gzigs pa 'dra 'dra red / deng sang gnyis ka bzhugs yod na / rtsod pa zhig mdzad na rje rin po che grwa skor rgyun ring mdzad tsang mkhas pa mi yong ngam snyam gyi yod / rtsa ba'i rigs pa'i rtsal dang / go stobs bshad stangs sogs mi pham 'jigs gi / gzhan gyi go na dgongs pa 'gal yong / ngas ngo ma bshad ni yin /
18. The *Paṇḍita* hat is an insignia of scholarship and high spiritual status in the rNying ma school. Its use is normally reserved for senior *mKhan pos.*
19. Kun bzang Chos grags, (1987), p. 643: Oṃ svasti jayantu / mi pham mgon po'i dgongs don ji bzhin rtogs / / 'jam dpal dbyang bzhin shes bya kun la mkhas / / phyogs las rnam rgyal chos kyi grags pa ltar / / snyan pas rgya mtsho'i gos can khyab gyur cig / / "Oṃ! May it be auspicious and victorious! [You have] realized the meaning of the intentions of Maitreya (Mipham) [and you are] wise in all fields of knowledge like Mañjuśrīghoṣa ('Jam dpal dbyangs). Being victorious (rNam rgyal) from [all] directions like Dharmakīrti, may [your] fame pervade the earth (rGya mtsho'i gos can)". See also Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 875.
20. Impure realms, here refers to the saṃsāric realms like this world in contrast to the pure Buddha fields like Sukhāvatī.
21. Kun bzang Chos grags, (1987), p. 661; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 879.
22. Ibid., p. 654; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 877.
23. Ibid., p. 641; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 874.
24. Ibid., p. 659; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 878.
25. Ibid., p. 644: da lta'i dus 'dir sa'i steng na bla ma mi pham las mkhas pa med /. See also Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 875.
26. Ibid., p. 644; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 875.
27. Ibid., p. 645-46: dPal sprul rin po cher / bla ma mi pham dang khyed gnyis su mkhas zhus par / mdo phyogs la nged gnyis phyogs 'dra tsam yin / sngags la mig phye btsum tsam gyi khyad yod / bla ma mi pham rang mkhas gsungs /
28. Steven D. Goodman, (1981), p. 64.
29. Ibid., p. 60; Dieter Schuh, (1973): *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke,* Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag, vol. XI 5, p. 157.
30. MGS, vol. Shrī, pp. 71-123; 'Ju Mi pham and Kunzang dPal ldan, (1997): *Nges shes sgron me rtsa 'grel,* Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House.

31. 'Jigs med Phun tshogs, *Kun mkhyen mi pham rgya mtsho la gsol ba 'debs tshul g.yul las rnam par rgyal ba'i rnga sgra* (n.p. n.d.).
32. 'Ju Mi pham rGya mtsho and Kun bzang dPal ldan, (1997), p. 256: slar rje nyid kyi gzigs gnang mzad pa'i zhal byang ni / nges shes rin po che'i sgron me 'di rang lo shin tu gzhon zhing slob gnyer gsar bu ba'i dus zhig na 'phral du yid la shar rtsom stan gcig par bris pa yin mod / don la 'gal ba med cing go rgyu gnad can 'dug pas ma bcos par de gar bzhag pa yin no / / zhes mi pham pas rang lo nga bdun par smras pa dge'o //
33. John W. Pettit, (1998), pp. 43-44.
34. Gene E. Smith, (1969), pp. 5-10; Steven D. Goodman, (1981), pp. 59-67.
35. See MGS, vol. Ka, pp. 71-138; 'Ju Mi pham rGya mtsho, (1993): *Bzo gnas nyer mkho'i za ma tog*, Xining: Qinghai People's Publishing House.
36. The four medicinal tantras are: *rTsa rgyud* or the Root Tantra, *bShad rgyud* or the Explanatory Tantra, *Man ngag gi rgyud* or the Instructional Tantra and *Phyi ma'i rgyud* or the Later Tantra. They are basic works of Tibetan indigenous medicine.
37. MGS, vol. Ka, pp. 559-75.
38. MGS, vol. Ka, pp. 751-815.
39. 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rGya mtsho, (1979): *sKad gnyis shan sbyar rab gsal nor bu'i me long*, Leh: Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod. Originally published in Kaḥ thog monastery in Tibet.
40. MGS, vol. Kha, pp. 467-532.
41. These are not in the Zhechen redaction although Kun bzang dPal ldan mentions in his catalogue.
42. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 463-72.
43. MGS, vol. Kha, pp. 533-49.
44. MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 929-40; This has been reproduced in a book. See Mipham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho and bKa' blon bShad sgra, (1998): *Yig bskur rnam gzhag me tog phreng ba*, Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House.
45. MGS, vol. Shrī, pp. 185-640.
46. MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 591-616, vol. Tsa, pp. 217-61.
47. This cannot be found in the Zhechen redaction.
48. MGS, vol. E and Waṃ.
49. *Sang* is the offering of incense by burning fragrant substances like sandalwood and juniper leaves. *Sur* is the offering of smell by burning edible things like flour, butter, meat etc. These are both said to be Bon po rituals later incorporated into Buddhist practices through coupling them with Buddhist principles. See MGS, vol. Dhī, pp. 1-88, pp. 407-15.
50. MGS, vol. Tsa, pp. 349-98. See translation by Jay Goldberg and Doya Nardin, *Mo: Tibetan Divination System*, Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1990.
51. This cannot be found in the Zhechen redaction.
52. MGS, vol. Dhī, pp. 89-455.
53. MGS, vol. Dhī, pp. 771-1118.
54. MGS, vol. Ja.
55. MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 525-90.
56. A mdo dGe 'dun Chos 'phel, (1996): *'Dod pa'i bstan bcos*, Dharamsala: Sherig Parkhang, p. 98.
57. MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 695-739.
58. MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 475-88.
59. See Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, (1999): *Las sna tshogs kyi be'u bum*, Xining: Qinghai People's Publishing House.
60. MGS, vol. Cha, pp. 1-7.
61. Ibid., pp. 9-1010.
62. MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 489-925; MGS, vol. 25, pp. 191-482.
63. MGS, vol. 23, pp. 241-475.
64. MGS, vol. Oṃ, pp. 1-157.
65. MGS, vol. 20.
66. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 473-620.
67. MGS, vol. Kha, 549-751.
68. MGS, vol. 27, pp. 285-354.
69. Ibid., pp. 467-94; MGS, vol. 23, pp. 319-28; MGS, vol. Pa, pp. 787-820. The Five Swords are:
    1) *Don rnam nges shes rab ral gri*
    2) *brDa shan 'byed the tshom drwa ba gcod pa'i ral gri*

3) *bDud kyi sgyu thabs 'joms pa mkhyen pa'i ral gri*
4) *Kun rtog 'ching ba gcod pa sngags kyi ral gri*
5) *Bya rtsol kun tu gcod pa ye shes ral gri*

The five Lilies are:

1) *mChog grub pa'i ut pal*
2) *sNgags grub pa'i ut pal*
3) *Ye shes grub pa'i ut pal*
4) *rTen 'brel grub pa'i ut pal*
5) *bDud rtsi grub pa'i ut pal.*

70. Mathew Kapstein, (1988): "Mipham's Theory of Interpretation", in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.): *Buddhist Hermeneutics,* University of Hawaii Press, pp. 149-74.
71. See the website: http://users.plinet.com/~rime/index.html.
72. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 1-129.
73. MGS, vol. Oṃ, pp. 159-201.
74. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 131-5.
75. MGS, vol. Ra.
76. MGS, vol. Ga, 410-509.
77. Ibid., pp. 517-670.
78. This cannot be found in the Zhechen redaction.
79. MGS, vol. Ga, pp. 343-58.
80. Ibid., pp. 332-42.
81. MGS, vol. 22, pp. 1-425.
82. Steven D. Goodman, (1981), pp. 58-78; Leslie S. Kawamura, (1981): "An Analysis of Mipham's *mKhas 'jug*", in Ronald M. Davidson (ed.) *Wind Horse: Proceedings of the North American Tibetological Society*, Asian Humanities Press, 112-26; Leslie S. Kawamura, (1982): "An Analysis of *Yānā-Kauśālya* in Mipham's *mKhas 'jug*", *Bulletin of Institute of Buddhist Cultural Studies,* Ryukoku University, vol. 20, 1-19; Leslie S. Kawamura, (1982): "An Outline of *Yāna-Kauśālya* in Mipham's *mKhas 'jug*", *Indogakku Bukkyogaku Ronshu*, vol. 29.1, 956-61; Leslie S. Kawamura, (1983): "The *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra* and Mipham's *mKhas 'jug*", *Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Philosophy,* Vienna: Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, vol. 2, 131-145.
83. Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, Erik Pema Kunzang (tr.) (1997): *mKhas 'jug,* Hong Kong: Rangjung Yeshe Publications; Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, Richard Barron (tr.) (1998): *mKhas 'jug,* Padma Publishing.
84. MGS, vol. Pa, pp. 1-347, and pp. 349-561.
85. MGS, vol. Aḥ.
86. MGS, vol. Pa, pp. 659-785.
87. Ibid., pp. 609-57. K. D. Mathes, I am told, has done a translation of this into German.
88. Ibid., pp. 563-608.
89. MGS, vol. Ga, pp. 359-78.
90. See footnote no. 70.
91. MGS, vol. Shrī, pp. 1-70.
92. MGS, vol. 24, pp. 1-222.
93. This cannot be found in the Zhechen redaction.
94. MGS, vol. 24, pp. 223-352.
95. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 157-217.
96. Nāgārjuna and Lama Mipham, Leslie Kawamura (trans.) (1975): *Golden Zephyr: Instructions from a Spiritual Friend,* California: Dharma Publishing.
97. MGS, vol. 21, pp. 439-500. See also English translation, Herbert V. Guenther, (1971): *Buddhist Philosophy in Theory and Practice*, Baltimore: Penguin Books.
98. One of the Seven Great Treasures by Klong chen pa.
99. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, 137-55.
100. MGS, vol. E and Waṃ.
101. MGS, vol. 25, pp. 1-190.
102. MGS, vol. Shrī, p. 92; 'Ju Mi pham and Kunzang dPal ldan, (1997), pp. 22-3; MGS, vol. 19, p. 10.
103. MGS, vol. Hūṃ, pp. 253-434.
104. Kun bzang Chos grags, (1987), vol. Hūṃ, p. 635; Dudjom Rinpoche, (1991), vol. ii, p. 872.

105. gTer mas are the teachings believed to be hidden by Padmasambhava and his disciples and later rediscovered by the Treasure Discoverers. Although this is common among rNying ma pas, it is not totally unknown in other traditions.
106. bKa' mas are the teachings transmitted uninterruptedly from teacher to disciple since the time of Early Translation.
107. MGS, vol. 21, pp. 1-207.
108. MGS, vol. 19, pp. 1-275.
109. MGS, vol. 21, pp. 510-610.
110. MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 417-65.
111. MGS, vol. 21, pp. 209-437.
112. MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 465-96.
113. MGS, vol. Ga, pp. 759-95.
114. Although Kun bzang dPal ldan mentions this in the catalogue, it is not much known that Mipham wrote this.
115. MGS, vol. Shrī, pp. 139-84.
116. MGS, vol. 19, pp. 277-370.
117. MGS, vol. Oṃ, pp. 839-54.
118. MGS, vol. 27, pp. 1-284, see also MGS, vol. 19, pp. 371-710.
119. Mipham, (1984): *Cintāmaṇi: Tibetan Manuscripts on Buddhist Meditation of the Great Perfection School*, Varanasi: Tarthang Tulku.
120. See n. 32.
121. John Pettit, (1998).
122. See John W. Pettit, (1999).
123. *dBu ma rgyan gyi rnam bshad 'jam dbyang bla ma dgyes pa'i zhal lung* (Exegesis on *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*: The Words of Delighted Master Mañjughoṣa), MGS, vol. Nga, pp. 1-358.
124. See also, Kennard Lipman, (1981): "A Controversial Topic from Mipham's Analysis of Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*", in Ronald M. Davidson (ed.), *Wind Horse: Proceedings of the North American Tibetological Society*, Asian Humanities Press, 40-57.
125. Ibid., pp. 359-415.
126. MGS, vol. Ca, pp 1-193; Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, (1993), pp. 1-130.
127. E. Gene Smith, (1969), p. 8.
128. MGS, vol. Ca, pp. 191-474; Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, (1993), pp. 133-464.
129. Ibid., pp. 1-193; Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, (1993), pp. 467-679.
130. Paul Williams, (1998): *The Reflexive Nature of Awareness: A Tibetan Madhyamaka Defence*, Surrey: Curzon Press.
131. Franz-Karl Ehrhard, (1988): "Observations on Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka in the rNying-ma-pa-school" in Helga Uebach and Jampa Panglung (eds.), *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 4th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Munich: Schloss Hohenkammer, pp. 47-57.
132. *'Jug 'grel zla ba'i zhal lung dri med shel phreng* (Commentary on Madhyamakāvatāra: Words of Candrakīrti, the Garland of Pure Crystal), MGS, vol. Oṃ, pp. 497-837. *dBu ma rtsa ba'i mchan gnas lugs rab gsal klu dbang dgongs rgyan* (Annotations of Mūlamadhyamaka: The Illuminator/of Reality and Ornament of Nāgārjuna's Thoughts), vol. Oṃ, pp. 203-495.
133. sNga rabs pa here refers to the scholars prior to Tsong kha pa.
134. The Three Principal Practices are the Mind of Renunciation, Bodhicitta and Wisdom. Mipham's commentary is however not within the Zhechen redaction.
135. MGS, vol. Pa, pp. 821-67.
136. MGS, vol. Shrī, pp. 125-38.
137. See n. 86.
138. See n. 87.
139. MGS, vol. 24, pp. 353-774.
140. MGS, vol. Ga, pp. 277-96.
141. Ibid., pp. 322-23.
142. Kun bzang dPal ldan mentions this in his catalogue but this is not even known to exist.
143. MGS, vol. Ga, pp. 297-323.
144. Katsumi Mimaki, (1982): "Le commentaire de Mipham sur le Jñānasārasamuccaya", *Indological and Buddhist Studies*, Volume in Honour of Professor J.W. De Jong on his Sixtieth Birthday, pp. 353-76.

145. Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho, Tarthang Tulku (tr. and comm.), (1997): *Calm and Clear.* California: Dharma Publishing.
146. MGS, vol. 22, pp. 427-710.
147. Primordial Purity (*Ka dag*) is the term for the empty nature of all things in rDzogs chen philosophy.
148. MGS, vol. Shrī, p. 88; Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho and Kun bzang dPal ldan, (1997), 19: Ka dag bdar sha chod pa la / / thal 'gyur lta ba mthar phyin dgos //
149. MGS, vol. Oṃ, p. 813: sNang stong mnyam par nges shes rdzogs pa che / / klu sgrub gzhung lugs bzang po kho nas mthong //

RECOVERING IDENTITY: STUDENTS' FIELDWORK IN BHUTAN*

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Through the prism of a project to which I contribute in Bhutan, I would like to reflect in this note upon some of the changes that I observed in this country after twenty-two years of constant interaction, especially in the field of Himalayan culture.[1] But this reflection will also touch on questions, brought out in an unexpected manner through a field experience in 2000, linked to this project, of identity and modernity among the college youth of Bhutan, considered to be the elite of the country, as well as the culture shock they experienced when working in a village for the first time.

Himalayan and Bhutanese studies are quite a new concept in the Bhutanese education curriculum. They are still on the fringes of mainstream studies but are rapidly gaining ground and the establishment of the new Institute for Language and Cultural Studies (ILCS) devoted to Bhutanese studies[2] is built south of Trongsa. This Institute, which exists now near Thimphu, as well as Sherubtse College, are now part of the Royal Bhutan University, a federation of higher education institutes all over the country, established in 2003.[3]

The first important move showing an interest in the field of Himalayan studies took place in 1995 when the Education Department accepted that Sherubtse (Shes rab rtse) College,[4] the only university-level college in the country at that time, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the University of Provence to have a programme of resource personnel and training cooperation in this field. Efforts were made to encourage young Bhutanese to undertake research into their own culture, participate in international seminars on Himalayan and Tibetan studies, and publish articles.

These efforts were accompanied by several workshops at Sherubtse College, conducted by French academics. The audience included not only history students – anthropology not yet being a subject in its own right – but any student or lecturer interested in the topics. They ranged from research methodology and fieldwork techniques to the history of Himalayan and Tibetan studies, introduction to ethnography and anthropology, history of relations between Tibet and Bhutan, history of religions, and oral traditions. These seminars were meant to create awareness amongst lecturers and students alike, and to sensitize them to the imperious necessity of collecting data on, and customs of, their own country.

The field trip

In October 2000, I went to Sherubtse College with Samten Karmay, my colleague from the CNRS. The topic of the workshop had been chosen by Tandin Dorji, our counterpart at Sherubtse College,[5] who felt that the students really needed to take on work in the field.[6] This was a logical development after three successive years of theoretical workshops and the fact that more and more Sherubtse College students were now asked by government offices or NGOs to conduct field surveys. It was decided that any interested student regardless of his or her major subject (history is only a subsidiary course at Sherubtse College), could take this introduction to fieldwork.[7]

This first-time experimentation in field ethnography took place from the 16th to the 20th of October 2000 in Eastern Bhutan where Sherubtse College is located. The first day was devoted to a seminar in which the students were reminded of the basis of ethnography in the field and the collection of data. The 17th, 18th and 19th of October were spent in the field and on the 20th, back at Sherubtse College, the six groups of students presented their findings to other students of College, their lecturers and officials.[8]

To everyone's surprise, the field trip proved to be very popular with the students. Thirty-three persons participated: thirty students, the lecturer-organizer and the two resource lecturers from France. There were twenty-four boys and six girls aged between twenty and twenty-four years. Nine boys were from the 2nd

year of the Dzongkha course, eleven boys and six girls came from 2nd year Economics, and four boys from 2nd year Geography.

Their motives for coming on this trip were a genuine interest in Bhutanese ethnography, but also the need for more experience in collecting and analyzing data for surveys.

The Bhutanese lecturer-organizer had chosen the Phongme (Phongs med) "block".[9] It was a good choice as far as distance from the College was concerned, (a three-hour bus or truck ride), but a challenging one because of several factors: This block was inhabited by different peoples; it was situated at the interface between agriculturalists and pastoralists and on a trade route. The students were therefore faced to a relatively complicated socio-economic set-up of which they were totally unaware.

I should say a few words here about Sherubtse College. Under the direction of Father W. Mackey, S.J., who worked for the Education Department, it began as a high school and was transformed, in 1976, into a junior college.[10] Today it is the most prestigious institution in the country, teaching, to the graduate level: English, Dzongkha, Geography, Maths-Physics, Economics and Computer Science. The entrance exam is very difficult and the 550 or so students of the College are considered to be the elite of the nation and the future decision-makers. Their basic needs are taken care of by the government and they even receive a small monthly stipend. The College campus is not significantly different from college campuses elsewhere, being attractive and functional, with good facilities, and is located an hour's drive from the district capital Trashigang (bKra shis sgang). The College students live what, by all accounts, is considered to be a privileged and sheltered life. They have access to computers, e-mail and the Internet, and the library subscribes to all the major Western and Asian magazines.

These remarks are important in this context because, although the students' parents came from all walks of life and the students had been accepted into the college on the basis of academic merit, a certain number of them had been largely cut off from their rural background for several years.

Early in the morning of the 17th October, the students left for Phongme in a bus with the Bhutanese lecturer. Three hours later they reached the heart of the settlements situated at an altitude of 1,700 m. In Eastern Bhutan – where, traditionally, clusters of houses forming what would be called a village are spread all over the mountainside – the centre of a block is a village that includes the temple, primary school, post office, Basic Health Unit (BHU), agriculture extension office and shops.

The "base camp" was the large primary school (three hundred students) whose headmaster had been informed well in advance by the Education Department of this sudden assault on his otherwise quiet place. Also informed was the "block headman", the *gup* (Dz. *rgad po*). Without his help, it would have been impossible to work in the village. He never interfered in the work as he was busy settling local problems and zooming up and down the main road on his scooter, but he had to be informed prior to our arrival as a matter of courtesy.

In such a short time, it was out of the question to do a thorough study of Phongme block. This workshop was aimed at giving the students the basic tools for field research and creating among them more awareness of the topic. We just wanted to assist them in this new experience and help them sort out their problems by encouraging them to speak out and articulate their findings and doubts. It was decided not to tell them too much about the problems they would encounter, but rather to let them go through the experience. This is the sound Socratic method where the teacher is seen as an advisor and a guide rather than an intimidating figure.

The students were divided into six groups, each of which included a woman and a speaker of Tshangla – a language commonly known as Sharchopkha (Dz. *shar phyogs kha*). This Eastern Bhutanese language is very different from Dzongkha and in Eastern Bhutan only members of the young generation who have been to school can speak Dzongkha. Most of the villagers over thirty-five years of age spoke only Tshangla, hence the absolute need to have in each group one student who spoke this language. Each group was given one of the following topics:

- The Phongme block geography and population
- Kinship system
- Marriage customs

- Religious practitioners
- Agriculture and Trade
- Relations with the neighbouring pastoralist region of Sakteng (Sag steng)

Every morning after breakfast the three supervisors met the students for half an hour to guide them in their day's work. Then each group went into the field for five hours. Some went to consult the village archives and officials of the village, some went to settlements to interview villagers. These activities involved a lot of walking, taking initiatives and adapting to unknown circumstances, all of which were quite a novelty for students who were used to classes and regulated campus life. Some of them coped very well, while some could not adjust to this new lifestyle and took refuge in passivity or even fell sick.

After lunch, we all met again at 3 p.m. and each group had to explain its problems, doubts or findings. This meeting lasted an hour and a half. In the evening, some played cards, some wrote notes or went back for more interviews after talking with the supervisors.

On the evening of the 17th, there was a big school fête organized by the primary school, and in the early afternoon of the 19th, before we went back to Sherubtse College, we watched the election of the new Assembly member of the area. I will return later to these two events.

The morning of the 20th, each group prepared for its presentation which took place that afternoon and lasted three hours in the presence of students, lecturers and college officials. After each group had presented its work, questions were asked from the floor. It was a very interactive event because by this time, the students had shed their shyness and felt empowered by this experience which gave them confidence.

Who is what? Culture shock, cultural gap

The arrival of thirty college students and three lecturers (*"lopen" / slob dpon*) including a foreign woman who spoke Dzongkha, as well as a man who looked like a Bhutanese but could speak neither Dzongkha nor Tshangla, initially caused quite a stir in the small settlement at the side of the road. People came out of the shops when the bus arrived and the headmaster rushed from his school to welcome us. The reaction of the College students was very interesting. Most of them came down from the bus with their backpacks and looked at the villagers who were looking at them. A few stayed in the bus until all the arrangements were made because, they told me later, they were tired by their journey and found the place too hot and dusty. They did not appear to show any curiosity or even faint interest in the surroundings or the arrangements. In fact, when they finally came down from the bus, they were mostly girls and I therefore put this attitude down to shyness, real or assumed, which is the proper behaviour for young Bhutanese women in unknown surroundings.

Some of them wore silk jackets and fashionable platform shoes, which were totally inappropriate for walking and for climbing the steep ladder-like staircases. Indeed I had made a mistake, taking for granted that they would know what to wear in the village, and not taking into account the importance of the sense of status of the Sherubtse students who showed it by dressing up.

Another problem was the village's single water tap. Water taps have brought a great improvement in hygiene to Bhutanese villages but, as this one was installed in the middle of the settlement along the trail, it, of course, did not provide any privacy and this was really difficult for the young students to bear.

None of them had brought a torch (flashlight), taking for granted that there would be electricity, which the village still did not have in 2000. One consequence was that as soon as it was dark, even with a borrowed flashlight, the young women were afraid to go to the toilet out in the fields and would go only if accompanied. They also kindly offered to come with me. This attitude had partly to do with the ancient beliefs in harmful spirits and partly to do with unwelcome encounters.

Food also proved to be an issue. The College had provided rations so that our group did not become a burden on the village and primary school and we had funds to pay for firewood, vegetables, eggs and other basic commodities. The primary school's cook was asked to cook for the whole group and paid a daily stipend. After the first meal, which was basic Bhutanese school-meal with lots of rice and hot chilli peppers, a vegetable curry and lentils, many students decided that the food was not tasty enough, and that they would

take turns cooking in their own way. This, indeed, they did, scurrying to the village for cheese to buy and peeling vegetables with unprecedented enthusiasm.

This came as a surprise because most Bhutanese from the countryside are more than happy to get a free meal, and as long as there is plenty of rice and chillies, they do not complain. These young educated students had become choosy, a fact which was confirmed later by the College officials, who said that many students did not eat the simple free meals provided in the College mess, but instead spent money to buy food, and especially instant noodles, from the shops. A generation ago only a very few people could afford to be choosy, and even then would not dare to be so because of the proper code of conduct.

The sun and walking were contingent problems. Because of their shoes, some of the girls could not really walk on the steep slopes to get to the houses and walking for one hour in the sun amounted, in their mind, to mild torture. It seems that they were so removed from their rural background by their lifestyle that they had forgotten and did not feel much connection with women working in the fields under the hot sun for hours on end.

These quite unimportant practical details serve, in themselves, as an assessment of the estrangement from the village life and mentality that had taken place in the students in one generation. The lifestyles of the villagers and the students had grown apart to such an extent that the students had, at first, none of their usual cultural markers when they arrived in the village.

The election of the National Assembly people's representative, the "*chimi*" (Dz. *spyi mi*), was a telling event. While one member of each family in Phongme block sat on the ground in front of the temple and listened to official speeches before voting with the imprint of their fingers, the students told me that only five of them had ever witnessed such a process before, and they had no idea of how it was done.[11]

We asked the students to come and witness the event, telling them that it was part of the fieldwork to observe any important event in the life of the village, even if it was not related directly to their topic. The students said they felt awkward with all the villagers looking at them and hot because of the blistering sun, both remarks being understandable. Indeed, in this very interesting turn of events, they were going through the same feelings as a foreign anthropologist in a village, awkward and uncomfortable at first.

Throughout the fieldwork, this feeling came back as a leitmotif. In fact, the students, although Bhutanese, experienced with the local population much the same problems as any anthropologist coming from abroad would encounter, and this was compounded by the fact that the majority of them did not understand the local language.

Everybody was confronted by an odd and complex situation where identities became blurred: the students felt removed from their own countrymen at least as much as the foreign academics accompanying them; in fact, they felt a kind of guilt feeling, because, being Bhutanese, they thought they would easily understand their own people, which was not the case. In this context, the foreigners had indeed an advantage over them: because of their identities as foreigners, they would be excused for cultural shortcomings, while the young Bhutanese experienced a kind of unexpected culture shock in their own country.

This shock became clear after the first day of fieldwork. During the evening general meeting, the students said that the villagers were diffident and they would not talk to them or answer their questions. Moreover, the students were taken for a tax survey team, which did not help contacts!

The students explained that they had gone into the houses in a casual way, as is done in rural Bhutan, and then started asking precise questions, questionnaire-like, to villagers who were not only puzzled by this lack of manners, but also very reluctant to talk.

The students therefore realized from this first day of fieldwork that their identity as Bhutanese as well as Sherubtse College students did not give them much privilege because the villagers regarded them as aliens. They had to revert to more traditional ways of dealing with people: The next morning, they rushed to buy betel quids, "*doma*", from the little shop to take as gifts to the households they planned to visit.

We had deliberately not given any precise instruction to the students as to how to go about dealing with people because we felt they would resent this as preposterous and patronising coming from foreigners. We

had decided to let them go through the experiences and then listen to their reactions. The Bhutanese supervisor totally agreed with this view.

Other causes of surprise for the students were the language problem, the complexity of the village ethnic set-up and the latent ostracism against one group. Being used to living on the College campus in a mixed social and ethnic environment, the students were appalled to find that one ethnic group in the Phongme block, who had settled there three generations earlier from the Eastern highlands, was living separately from the main Easterners group, that inter-marriage was frowned upon by both communities and that when the students went to visit the "outsiders", they pretended to speak only their own language, not even Sharchopkha (Tshangla), therefore cutting themselves off from any form of communication. The reasons for this behaviour are too complex to be explained here, but the students came back, shaking their heads in disbelief.

Moreover, as many students did not speak Sharchopkha fluently, they had to rely on the person in the group who spoke it in order to communicate, and this person eventually became the leader of the group while the other members of the group discovered – on top of the problem of straight questions, already mentioned earlier – the translation gap, as well as the need to cross-check information either with other people, or with the written records.

The first evening's meeting was full of doubts, questions and disbelief, accompanied by "Madam, they refuse to answer. Madam, we do not understand them." These students had, discovered the basic problems of fieldwork and realized that, while not foreigners, they were aliens to the villagers and vice-versa.

After a prolonged session, a few of them were very discouraged and their interest in the fieldwork vanished, but most of them felt that their honour as students from Sherubtse College was at stake. Because of the academic system they were used to, they had thought that a straight question calls for a straight answer. Instead they found out that the villagers' mentality and logic were far from ticking answers on an exam paper and replying to the point.

Therefore, the next morning, they went back to their respective assignments with a more open mind to the villagers' ways and customs, taking little gifts of betel quids, sweets and biscuits.

They also decided not to be so blunt in their quest for information. Their efforts to adapt were genuine and the breakthrough with the villagers came the second evening when the primary school organized a fête in honour of the students and for the villagers.

As soon as this information arrived on the second morning, the students decided that they must contribute to the fête by putting up a show for the school and the villagers. All of them had talents of some sort, as extra-curricular activities are very much encouraged in the education system. The primary school brought out its sound system powered by a precious generator, a big dinner was prepared by the school and was served on the sports ground. Lamas and officials were invited to attend and the villagers came to watch the show. The first event of the evening was a bon fire lit in a traditional style by torch-bearers coming from the four cardinal directions and saying some auspicious words in English[12]. The show was a succession of dances, songs and sketches by the school children and the College students. There were English songs performed by the singing stars of Sherubtse College, popular modern Dzongkha and Sharchopkha songs, dances from Northern Bhutan, Southern Bhutan and Hindi films performed by the school children, and Sharchopkha and Dzongkha comic sketches by a student who was a true comedian. Each number was introduced in a professional style by the students and part of the show was presented with poise and zest by a young woman who wanted to become an anchorwoman on Bhutanese television. The audience roared with laughter and clapped enthusiastically.

The best speakers from the College also explained to the audience where they came from, that they had gained admission to Sherubtse College through hard work and that the Phongme children could have the same opportunity. They described the college in enthusiastic terms, telling the villagers that they were aware of having been given a great opportunity and having to give back to the country what had been given to them by serving the people. Although for a casual outsider, it might have sounded a little rhetoric, the enthusiasm of the students and their spontaneous words did not leave any doubt about their conviction, and this included the Southern Bhutanese students who spoke excellent Dzongkha, in addition to Nepali and English.[13]

Their words were the echo of the King's address to all Bhutanese students: "As the future of Bhutan lies in the hands of our people, it is our responsibility to make sure that the future well-being of our country is secure in the hands of Bhutanese people and that our younger generations can successfully shoulder this sacred responsibility with complete loyalty and dedication".[14]

The evening ended with a "*lebe*" (Dz. *legs sbe*) dance, the auspicious send-off dance in which everyone must participate, regardless of rank and status. It is performed at all occasions and is seen as a "community binding" ritual.

That evening, the students came down from the lofty level where the villagers had placed them and became part of the community. The fact that the students had produced a show for the villagers and talked to them about their life, as well as shown respect for the lamas and the officials, had restored the traditional order where to be in a harmonious relationship, one has to give and take at the same time to be respected.

According to the Bhutanese scholar Karma Ura, "Harmony is a matter of individuals not upsetting the choreography dependent on group combination. Humility, a key Buddhist attribute, is directly concerned with group orientation and social harmony. Harmony is facilitated if individuals can subordinate themselves to the group, while the group can reconcile and balance its interests with those of its individual members".[15]

In this context, the concept of exchange, so dear to many anthropologists, was relevant. The students were no longer seen as disturbing the normal life with their questions, they were not 'predators' but givers, and therefore could find their place in the society.

However, also implemented there was a deep Bhutanese concept rooted in Buddhism, Thadamtshi[16] (Dz. *mTha' dam tshig* or *Tha dam tshig*[17] / Tib. *dam tshig*). It is respect for elders but also recognition of those to whom you owe respect and responsibility towards younger or less privileged ones.

The Bhutanese society operates largely on what is considered a moral concept[18] and people who are seen not to be abiding by it in their behaviour towards others are often rejected. They no longer belong to the society, and, therefore, members of the society have no duties or obligations towards them. Karma Ura analyzes this concept in its Buddhist context: "Buddhist ethics have always been a strong feature of the Bhutanese society. Custom and law supported the moral code inspired by religion. Buddhist morality became influential socially and legally partly because it percolated down to the villages. Of these values, the principle of *tha damtshig le jude* has gained currency and finds mention in school textbooks. The boundary (*tha*) of morality (*damtshig*) and causes and effects of actions (*le jude*) are reasserted in this concept, which should limit our actions to what accords with morality. This kind of ethical constraint is meant to bind all of us, and the freedom we should enjoy is to live in a way becoming to Buddhists [...]. The idea of concern for others or altruism can be seen as a broadened welfare function, which does not include people, but also other beings that constitute the environment."[19]

This second evening at the school signalled a shift in the attitude of both the villagers and the students. However, I could not immediately grasp which operating concept had made this change possible. The next morning, it was easier to explain to the students the importance of "participant observation" in ethnography because they had just experienced it, but I still felt it was quite inappropriate to describe what I had witnessed: a key element of explanation was still missing.

It was only later that afternoon during the *choekhor* (*chos skor*) that the moral concept of Thadamtshi became clear to me. It was this "root-element"[20] of moral conduct in Bhutanese society that had been at work during this field experience.

The *choekhor* is an annual religious festival that takes place in Phongme on the 21st day of the 8th month. After a ritual performed by the religious practitioners[21] inside the temple, the villagers, including women, carry the Buddhist scriptures around the fields of the village as a blessing.[22] The students asked Lopen Yonten Phuntsho questions about the significance of this ritual that some of them had never seen. Lopen Yonten Phuntsho was a learned religious practitioner, who happened to be the father of one of our students and a much respected lama in the area.

During the visit to the temple, the students' behaviour conformed in all respects to the proper etiquette code, Driglam Namzhag[23] (Dz. *sGrig lam rnam gzhag*[24]). Gone was the casual attitude and English slang.

Impeccably dressed, true believers or not, they all paid respect to the religious practitioners and the images on the altar, lit incense, offered Dalda[25] for the butter-lamps and were blessed by holy scented water.

Once outside the temple, with great deference, they asked Lopen Yonten Phuntsho the meaning of the Choekhor ritual. He replied at length. Once again, everybody behaved in a manner appropriate to the situation and did not interrupt the lama, the girls maintaining a slightly greater distance from the lama than did the boys.

At last, I found myself to be, unwittingly, part of the system. I learned that when the students came back to Sherubtse College, they told their friends that I had behaved appropriately "in the Bhutanese way" (*'Brug gi lugs gsol*) by taking care of their comfort, ministering to two of them who had fallen sick, and cleaning the wound of a girl who had fallen from a steep staircase. Because I was their supervisor and a foreigner, I was not expected to look after them and had been automatically placed in a different social and moral set-up. By taking care of them, I had unconsciously integrated what they considered as the Bhutanese value system and acted according to Thadamtshi.

Conclusion

The transformation of English-speaking, happy-go-lucky kids with Walkmans in their ears into etiquette-abiding, religious-minded and socially responsible youngsters was natural in the sense that it was not forced upon them by anybody giving orders – they spontaneously adopted the correct behaviour on important occasions. This transformation was probably due to the concept of Thadamtshi, which is not obvious to grasp.[26] As for Driglam Namzhag, the code of conduct, etiquette, it could be understood as the implementing arm, the external manifestation of Thadamtsi. In other words, the code of conduct would be the agent that implements the Thadamtsi concept.

This hypothesis appears to be supplemented by Lyonpo (*blon po*) Dago Tshering in his introduction to the *Bhutanese etiquette: a manual*: "The etymology of '*Driglam Namzhag*' is as follows: *Drig* – harmonious; *lam* – path or behaviour; *nam* – in order; *zhag* – to keep. Therefore, the expression 'Driglam Namzhag' means to maintain harmonious behaviour. It is a set of social norms aimed at fostering in a person the proper mode of conduct and social values."[27]

Without any fear of sounding naive, it was on all accounts and for all of us a remarkable and enriching experience. Besides having been an introduction to fieldwork, it turned out to be, for students accustomed to foreign thoughts and styles, an exercise in identity searching and in revitalizing their Bhutanese cultural markers.

Having arrived as aliens, the students left the village as insiders – even if not on the same deep level as the villagers. They had reverted to the traditional *modus operandi* in accordance to the Thadamtshi concept and its agent, the code of behaviour (Driglam Namzhag), thus allowing themselves to be reintegrated into the same value system as that of the villagers.

Notes

* This paper was written at the beginning of 2001 and therefore reflects the situation at that time. Since then the issue of Thadamtsi (*mTha' dam tshig)* and Driglam Namzha (*sGrig lam rnam gzhag)* has been discussed by Richard Whitecross ("Virtuous beings: *driglam namzhag* and *thadamtshi* and being a moral person in contemporary Bhutanese society", paper presented at Edinburgh University, Dept of Anthropology, Jan. 2001, unpublished; "Thadamtshi: the moral basis of Bhutanese social values". *Bhutan Society*. December 2002; "Driglam Namzha: the code of conduct and its role in contemporary Bhutan". Paper presented at *Tibetan Identity: Continuity and Change (1950 – 2000) Conference*, School of Oriental and African Studies, 12th September 2001); and Karma Phuntsho ("Echoes of Ancient Ethos: Reflections on Some Popular Bhutanese Social Themes", in K. Ura and S. Kinga (eds.) *The Spider and the Piglet. Proceedings of the First International Seminar on Bhutan Studies*, The Centre for Bhutan Studies: Thimphu, 2004, 564-580).

1. I would like to thank here Gene E. Smith. Without his help and support, I would never have gone to Bhutan and embarked on what is the most enriching professional and personal experience in my life. This article is just a small token of the enormous gratitude I owe him.

2. This institute replaced the Rigney (*rig gnas*) school established in 1961, which was transformed into the Institute of Language and Cultural Studies in 1996 and presently located at Semtokha (*srin mo rdo khal sems rtogs kha*) near Thimphu. UNESCO worked with the Education Division of Bhutan on a master-plan for this institute which will be shifted at a new location, Takse south of Trongsa, in the near future. A new curriculum is being drafted.
3. The Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) established in 1998 in Thimphu works as a think tank and is not an institution which offers higher education courses. www.bhutanstudies.org.bt
4. In this article, names and nouns will be written as they are today in English transcription in Bhutan. At the first occurrence of the name or noun, the Dzongkha transliteration will be given in brackets. Dzongkha is the national language of Bhutan.
5. Tandin Dorji is now officer at the Curriculum Division, Ministry of Education in Paro. He holds a MA in Anthropology from the University of Provence and is currently working on his PhD (University of Paris X).
6. All my sincere thanks go to Tandin Dorji who masterminded the logistics of this workshop, and to his colleague Ugyen Pelgen, who, although unfortunately, he could not join us in the field, was involved in the preparation.
7. Funds for the logistics were provided by the French Foreign Ministry in the framework of the cooperation project.
8. The detailed fieldwork results were published. See Tandin Dorji, "Field trip to Phongmey: a synoptic report", in *Sherub Doenme, Academic journal of Sherubtse college*, Kanglung, vol. 6 (1&2) 2002, 86-102.
9. A block, "*gewog*", (Dz. *rged 'og*) is the smallest administrative unit, consisting of several settlements.
10. On Father Mackey's education work in Bhutan, see his biography by Howard Solverson, *The Jesuit and the Dragon*, Montreal: Robert Davies Publishing, 1995.
11. The outcome of the election was that the incumbent "chimi" was seen as inefficient on the issue of electricity, and was replaced by a woman "chimi".
12. English is the medium of instruction from the primary school level, along with Dzongkha.
13. I will not deal in this article with what has been termed the "Southern problem" – which erupted in the early 1990s – and its consequences.
14. *Bhutan 2020: a vision for peace, prosperity and happiness*, Thimphu: Planning Commission, 1999, 13.
15. Karma Ura, "Tradition and development", in *Bhutan: mountain-fortress of the gods*, C. Schicklgruber and F. Pommaret (eds.), London-Boston: Serindia-Shambhala, 1997: 247.
16. See Karma Ura 1997: 239 – 249; and Richard Whitecross, "Virtuous beings: *driglam namzhag* and *thadamtshi* and being a moral person in contemporary Bhutanese society", paper presented at Edinburgh University, Dept of Anthropology, Jan. 2001.
17. Both spellings are found in Dzongkha. The second appears more in line with the meaning.
18. *mTha' dam tshig / Tha dam tshig* is often associated with *las rgyu 'bras*, which means the fruit of one's actions in a Buddhist context.
19. K. Ura, 1997: 247-248.
20. I use here the neologism "root-element" in reference to the words "root-teacher" and "root-teaching" in the Buddhist concept.
21. I will not, on this occasion, go into the detailed description of religious practitioners in Bhutan.
22. On this ritual in Bhutan, see F. Pommaret, "*Yul* and *Yul lha*: the territory and its deity in Bhutan", in the *Bulletin of Tibetology*, Gangtok, 2004.
23. On the Bhutanese code of conduct, see: Driglam Namzhag (Bhutanese etiquette: a manual), *sGrig lam rnam gzhag lag len*. National Library, Thimphu: National Library 1999 (bilingual); and *sGrigs lam rnam gzhag gi deb ther nor bu'i 'phreng ba, rGyal po'i gzim dpon* rDo rje rgyal mtshan, Thimphu: National Library, 1999.
24. In Tibetan *bzhag*, but in Dzongkha *gzhag*.
25. Dalda is a kind of vegetable margarine manufactured in India and which replaces butter as offering in the Himalayas. Butter, which is much more expensive, is reserved for grand occasions.
26. On Thadamtshi, see *sGrigs lam rnam gzhag gi deb ther nor bu'i 'phreng ba*, 1999: 32-39.
27. *Bhutanese etiquette: a manual*, 1999: xxxvii.

PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS AND THE DEBATE OVER IDEAS IN THE BONPO MOTHER TANTRA

John Myrdhin Reynolds

Part One: General Introduction to Bon

A. Bon and Buddhism in Tibet

Bon is the name for the pre-Buddhist religious culture of Tibet, sometimes erroneously thought to represent just a primitive North Asian shamanism. However, nowadays Tibetan Bonpos are not shamans, but have monks, scholars, books, and monasteries fully comparable with the four Buddhist schools. Moreover, Bon has been recognized by the Dalai Lama and his government as the fifth Tibetan school and representation on the Council of Religious Affairs at Dharamsala has been given to the Bonpos.

Like the Nyingmapa school, Bon divides its teachings into nine successive vehicles (*theg pa rim dgu*) and its higher spiritual teachings into Sutra (*mdo*), Tantra (*rgyud, sngags*), and Dzogchen (*man ngag, sems phyogs*). Thus, one may ask, if Bon possesses similar institutions and teachings to the Tibetan Buddhist schools, what is the difference between them? Both sides agree it is principally a difference of lineage.

B. Accusation of Plagiarism

The similarity of Bonpo and Buddhist texts and teachings is usually explained by the medieval Tibetan histories composed by Buddhist monk-scholars as simple plagiarism. The Bonpos merely copied Buddhist texts and changed just a few words, as example, changing *chos* into *bon*, and thereby appropriated the texts as their own. This seemed a plausible explanation before the Bon texts themselves came to light for Western scholars. However, in the past few decades many Bon texts were reprinted in India and now in China there has been republished the Bonpo *bKa' 'gyur* and *bKa' brten*, so the situation is now quite different than it was years ago. And indeed, the historical situation with regard to Bon also appears to be much more complex than simple plagiarism.

C. Three Phases in the Development of Bon

The Bonpos are aware of the efforts by Tibetan historians to denigrate their tradition as mere plagiarism. The Bonpo Lamas reply that their tradition, which they assert comes from Tazik in Central Asia, is the older and that, indeed, Indian Buddhism is based upon it! They point to extant lineages in seeking to establish this fact, as, for example, the lineages found in the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*.[1] But they are also aware that in the Buddhist histories and in some Western writings it is asserted that Bon is only primitive shamanism. Modern Bonpo scholars, such as Lopon Tenzin Namdak, point out that the word Bon has three distinct meanings, referring to three separate historical strata:

1. Primitive Bon

The indigenous shamanism and animistic tribal religious culture of Tibet and Zhangzhung, expressed in the four Causal Ways of Bon (*rgyu'i bon*) and preserved in rituals both Bonpo and Buddhist.

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1. On the Bonpo lineages for the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, see Samten G. Karmay, *The Little Luminous Boy: The Oral Tradition from the Land of Zhangzhung depicted on two Tibetan Paintings*, Orchid Press, Bangkok 1998. And on the traditional Bonpo view of their history, see Shardza Rinpoche in Samten G. Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings: A Tibetan History of Bon*, London Oriental Series Vol. 26, Oxford University Press, London 1972.

2. Old Bon (bon rnying ma) or g.Yung drung bon

The higher spiritual teachings of the Fruitional Ways of Bon (*'bras bu'i bon*) that comprise Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen. These are said to have been translated from the Zhangzhung language into Tibetan beginning, it is said, in the time of the second Tibetan king Mu khri btsan po and continuing up through the early Medieval Period. These texts of Old Bon are classified as *gter ma* (hidden treasure texts) and as *snyan rgyud* (oral tradition).

3. New Bon (bon gsar ma)

The Bonpo Terma tradition since the 14th century, mainly in Eastern Tibet, written not in the archaic language of the above, but contemporary Buddhistic Tibetan. This textual tradition is closely related to the Nyingmapa Terma system. Polymaths like the late Shardza Rinpoche (d. 1935) were exponents of both Old and New Bon. However, Lopon Tenzin Namdak and the revived sMan ri monastery in India remain leading proponents of the Old Bon, especially the *Bru lugs*, the traditions of the ancient Bru clan who originally established this monastic lineage.[2]

D. The Tantra System of Bon

1. The Primordial Buddha and the Three Transmissions

According to Bonpo tradition, the teachings of both Tantra and Dzogchen originated from the Primordial Buddha Kun tu bZang po, the Dharmakaya, who is their ultimate source. These revelations occurred on a transcendent plane of existence called Akanistha (*'og min*) at the summit and center of all existence and on an occasion outside of profane time and history. There is no pretense of an historical circumstance here. Kun tu bZang po, as the Primordial Buddha, has been enlightened from the very beginning and has never been mixed up in Samsara nor tainted by its passions and obscurations. He remains ever beyond time and conditioning and causality. Yet, He is simultaneously present as the principal of enlightenment or Buddha-nature inherent in the core of every single sentient being. In this function as the Adibuddha or Primordial Buddha, He corresponds to Samantabhadra (*kun tu bzang po*) in the Old Tantra system of the Nyingmapas.

According to Bon, and in particular to the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, the initial line of transmission was transcendental and supra-mundane, occurring under the light of eternity and at the center of existence. This represented the direct mind-to-mind transmission of the Sugatas or Buddhas, usually listed as nine in number, so-called because it is instantaneous and telepathic without symbols or words intervening.

Another subsequent transmission occurred by way of symbolic expression among the Vidyadharas or "knowledge holders" belonging to different races divine (*lha*), chthonic (*klu*), and human (*mi*); and by way of words among human masters. There are, therefore, three principal modes of transmission:

(A) The Mind Transmission of the Sugatas (*bder gshegs dgongs brgyud*),
(B) the Symbolic Transmission of the Vidyadharas (*rig 'dzin brda brgyud*), and
(C) the Oral Transmission of the Siddhas (*grub thob snyan brgyud*).

2. The Three Cycles of Precepts

The texts of the Bon tradition are classified in a number of ways. In general, the Buddha Tonpa Shenrab, the founder of the Bon tradition, is said to have expounded Bon in three cycles of teachings which are Outer, Inner, and Secret (*bka' phyi nang gsang skor gsum*).[3]

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2. Again, on the Bru clan and its associated monasteries of G.yas ru dben sa kha and Bkra shes sman ri, see Karmay, *Treasury*, op. cit.
3. The Three Cycles of Precepts which are Outer, Inner, and Secret (*bka' phyi nang gsang skor gsum*):
   1. The Outer Cycle (*phyi skor*) pertaining to the Sutra system (*mdo lugs*) which represents the Path of Renunciation (*spong lam*);

3. The Four Portals of Bon and the Treasury

But a more usual classification is known as the Four Portals of Bon and the Treasury which is the fifth (*bon sgo bzhi mdzod lnga*). This mode of classification appears to represent an older and independent system of classification in contrast to the better known Nine Ways. These Portals of Bon comprise four groups of teachings together with a general appendix known as the Treasury (*mdzod*).[4]

4. The Nine Ways of Bon

Then there is the classification system known as the Nine Ways of Bon or the Nine Successive Vehicles to Enlightenment (*bon theg pa rim dgu*). This includes three distinct Terma (*gter ma*) traditions:

(A) The System of the Southern Treasures

The System of the Southern Treasures (*lho gter lugs*) refers to the treasure texts discovered at 'Brig mtshan mtha' dkar in South Tibet and at sPa gro in Bhutan. This tradition is divided into the Causal Ways (*rgyu'i theg pa*), which have worldly purposes, and the Fruitional Ways (*'bras bu'i theg pa*), which have a spiritual purpose, the transcendent goal of liberation from Samsara.[5]

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2. The Inner Cycle (*nang skor*) pertaining to the Tantra system (*sngags lugs*) rep the Path of Transformation (*sgyur lam*);
3. The Secret Cycle (*gsang skor*) pertaining to the Upadesha teachings (*man ngag*) representing the Path of [Self-] Liberation (*grol lam*) or Dzogchen.

4. The Four Portals of Bon and the Treasury which is the fifth (*bon sgo bzhi mdzod lnga*):
   1. The Bon of "the White Waters" containing the Fierce Mantras (*chab dkar drag po sngags kyi bon*). This represents the Tantra system (*sngags lugs*) and includes the cycle of the Father Tantras of "the General Collection" (*pha rgyud spyi spungs skor*).
   2. The Bon of "the Black Waters" for the continuity of Existence (*chab nag srid pa rgyud kyi bon*), this represents the shamanic and magical rituals for expelling evil spirits and negative energies (black), corresponding to the Causal Ways of Bon.
   3. The Bon of the Extensive Collection from Phanyul (*'phan yul rgyas pa 'bum gyi bon*), this represents the Sutra system (*mdo lugs*), especially including the *Khams chen*, the *Prajnaparamita* in 16 vols.
   4. The Bon of the Scriptures and the Secret Instruction of the Masters (*dpon gsas man ngag lung gi bon*), consist of the Agamas and Upadeshas for Dzogchen.
   5. The Treasury (*mdzod*), the appendix with materials from all four portals.
5. The Nine Ways of Bon or the Nine Successive Vehicles to Enlightenment (*bon theg pa rim dgu*) according to the System of the Southern Treasures (*lho gter lugs*):

   A. The Four Causal Ways of Bon (*bon rgyu'i theg pa bzhi*):
   1. The Way of the Practice of Prediction (*phywa gshen theg pa*), principally concerned with divination (*mo*), astrological calculation (*rtsis*), medical diagnosis (*dpyad*), and healing rituals (*gto*).
   2. The Way of the Practice of Visible Manifestations (*snang gshen theg pa*), concerned with invoking the gods and positive energies.
   3. The Way of the Practice of Magical Power (*'phrul gshen theg pa*), concerned with controlling the spirits and exorcism rituals (*sel ba*) for dispelling negativities.
   4. The Way of the Practice of Existence (*srid gshen theg pa*), conncerned with the process of dying, the Bardo experience, and the process of rebirth (*srid pa*), including 'Dur ritual for setting to rest ghosts.

   B. The Five Fruitional Ways of Bon (*bon 'bras bu'i theg pa lnga*):
   1. The Way of the Virtuous Lay Practitioners (*dge bsnyen theg pa*), concerned with ethics and morality, the 10 Paramitas, building stupas, etc.
   2. The Way of the Ascetic Sages (*drang srong theg pa*), concerned with the Vinaya rules for monks.
   3. The Way of the White A (*a dkar theg pa*), includes both the Lower and the Higher Tantras, deity transformation, mandala practice, etc.
   4. The Way of the Primordial Shen (*ye gshen theg pa*), concerned with proper relationship to the Guru, Guru Sadhana, etc.
   5. The Unsurpassed Way (*bla med theg pa*) or Dzogchen. See David Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon: Excerpts from the gZi brjid edited and translated*, London Oriental Series vol.18, Oxford University Press, London 1967; reprinted Prajna Press, Boulder 1980.

(B) The System of the Central Treasures

The System of the Central Treasures (*dbus gter lugs*) refers to the treasure texts discovered in Central Tibet, including those at bSam yas monastery. This tradition employs a classification system similar to the Nyingmapa one.[6]

(C) The System of the Northern Treasures

Finally there is the Nine Ways according to the System of the Northern Treasures (*byang gter lugs*). According to our authorities, Lopon Tenzin Namdak and Shardza Rinpoche, little is known of this system.

5. The Four Types of Tantra

According to Lopon Tenzin Namdak,[7] there are four distinct classes of Tantras in the Bon tradition:

(A) *Kriya Tantra,* "the Tantra of Ritual Action" (*bya rgyud, bya ba'i rgyud*)

Here there are found twelve ritual texts or Tantras (*rgyud bcu gnyis*) and as many Yidam practices.[8]

(B) *Charya Tantra*, "the Tantra of Conduct" (*spyod rgyud, spyod pa'i rgyud*)

Here there are seven principal Tantras and Yidam practices.[9] These two classes comprise the Outer or Lower Tantras.

(C) *Yeshen Tantra,* "the Tantra of the Primordial Practice" (*ye gshen gyi rgyud*)

Here there are five principal Yidams belonging to the Father Tantras (*pha rgyud*) who represent the aspects of Body, Speech, Mind, Quality, and Activity respectively. They are also known as "the Five Supreme

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6. The Nine Ways according to the System of the Central Treasures (*dbus gter lugs*):
   1. The Way of Gods and Men where one relies on another (*lha mi gzhan rten gyi theg pa*): This corresponds to the Shravakayana of the Nyingmapa system and to the Vaibhashika philosophy (Hinayana).
   2. The Way of the Shenrabpas who understand by themselves (*rang rtogs gshen rab kyi theg pa*): This corresponds to the Pratyekabuddhayana and the Sautrantika philosophy (Hinayana).
   3. The Way of the Compassionate Bodhisattvas (*thugs rje sems dpa'i theg pa*): This corresponds to the Bodhisattvayana and the Chittamatra philosophy of Yogachara school (Mahayana).
   4. The Way of the Bodhisattvas who are without Conceptual Elaborations (*g.yung drung sems dpa'i spros med pa'i theg pa*): This also corresponds to the Bodhisattvayana and the Madhyamaka philosophy (Mahayana).
   5. The Way of the Primordial Bon of Pure Conduct and Ritual Action (*bya ba gtsang spyod ye bon theg pa*): This corresponds to the Kriya Tantra.
   6. The Way of the Clairvoyant Knowledge that possesses every aspect (*rnam par kun ldan mngon shes kyi theg pa*): This corresponds to Charya Tantra.
   7. The Way of Visibly Manifesting Compassion by way of the Generation Process in terms of Siddhis (*dngos bskyed thugs rje rol pa'i theg pa*): This corresponds to Yoga Tantra and to Mahayoga Tantra where the emphasis is on the Generation Process (*bskyed rim*).
   8. The Way wherein Everything is Completely Perfected and Exceedingly Meaningful (*shin tu don ldan kun rdzogs kyi theg pa*): This corresponds to Mahayoga Tantra and Anuyoga Tantra where the emphasis is on the Perfection Process (*rdzogs rim*).
   9. The Unsurpassed Way of the Highest Peak of the Primordial Great Perfection (*ye nas rdzogs chen yang rtse bla med kyi theg pa*): This represents Dzogchen.

   See Lopon Tenzin Namdak and John Reynolds (tr.), *The Condensed Meaning of an Explanation of the Teachings of Yungdrung Bon*, Bonpo Foundation, Kathmandu n.d.; also printed as an appendix in John Myrdhin Reynolds, *Yungdrung Bon: The Eternal Tradition*, Bonpo Translation Project (privately printed), New York 1994.
7. Oral communication.
8. In the Kriya Tantra (*bya ba'i rgyud*), there are 12 ritual texts or Tantras (*rgyud bcu gnyis*) and as many Yidams practices: (1) *Kun dbyings*, (2) *Byams ldan*, (3) *Dge bsnyen*, (4) *Sman lha*, (5) *Kun rig*, (6) *Rgyal ba rgya mtsho*, (7) *'Dus 'khor*, (8) *Byams ma*, (9) *rRnam dag*, (10) *Rnam 'joms*, (11) *Smon lam*, (12) *Gde spyod*.
9. In the Charya Tantra (*spyod pa'i rgyud*), there are seven principal Tantras and corresponding Yidams practices: (1) *Klong rgyas*, (2) *Rnam dag padma klong yang*, (3) *rRnam par rgyal ba*, (4) *Gto bu pho sbyong*, (5) *Rgyun*, (6) *Rgyas par kun snang*, (7) *Ma tri rin chen sgron ma*.

Divine Citadels" (*gsas mkhar mchog lnga*). The first three Tantras are known as the General Collection (*spyi spungs*). Then there are eight additional Tantras.[10]

(D) *Yeshen Chenpo Tantra,* "the Tantra of Total Primordial Practice" (*ye gshen chen po'i rgyud*)

The focus of practice is on the Perfection Process (*rdzogs rim*) and the emphasis is on Guru Sadhana (*bla sgrub*) rather than on Yidam practice, as for example, Dran pa nam mkha', Tshe dbang rig 'dzin, and so on.

Part Two: Introduction to the Mother Tantra

A. The Bonpo Mother Tantra and Its Contents

1. The Position of the Mother Tantra

In terms of the above systems of classification for the Bonpo Tantras, the Mother Tantra is classified as *A dkar theg pa* according to the Southern Treasures, as *Shin tu don dan kun rdzogs kyi theg pa* according to the Central Treasures, and as *Ye gshen gyi rgyud* according to the four-fold system of Tantras. Nevertheless, the ultimate view of the Mother Tantra is considered to be Dzogchen, which is the highest of all vehicles.[11]

2. The Tantras of the Base, the Path, and the Fruit

The Cycle of the Mother Tantra is known as "the Sun of Compassion" (*ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma'i skor*).[12] The root texts of the cycle comprise the three Buddha Tantras:

(A) The Tantra of the Base (*gzhi yi rgyud*) which is entitled *The Tantra of the Primordial Buddhahood of the Base* (*ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma gzhi ye sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud*),

(B) the Tantra of the Path (*lam gyi rgyud*) which is entitled *The Tantra of the Manifest Buddhahood of the Path* (*ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma lam mngon sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud*), and

(C) the Tantra of the Fruit (*'bras bu'i rgyud*) which is entitled *The Tantra of the Perfect Buddhahood of the the Fruit* (*ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma 'bras bu rdzogs sangs gyas pa'i rgyud*).

Primordial Buddhahood (*ye sangs rgyas*) as the Base is present in every sentient being from the very beginning, but goes unrecognized because of the presence of obscurations and karmic traces, like clouds in the sky concealing the face of the sun. This presence is termed the Buddhahood of the Base. Manifest Buddhahood or Buddhahood coming into manifestation along the Path (*mngon sangs rgyas*) refers to the process of purification were these obscurations and karmic traces are dissolved, like clouds parting in the sky so that the face of the sun may occasionally be glimpsed. This represents the Buddhahood of the Path. Perfect Buddhahood or Buddhahood perfected and completed (*rdzogs sangs rgyas*), so that it is wholly revealed, is like the face of the sun clearly visible in the sky devoid of clouds. This represents actual, not just potential Buddhahood; it is termed the Buddhahood of the Fruit.

3. The Commentaries

Following the texts of the three Tantras comes a general historical commentary entitled *Nyi ma'i dkyil 'khor*, "The Mandala of the Sun", and then eight commentaries on the chapters of the First Tantra, which deal with such topics as philosophical tenets, cosmology and embryology, the evolution of the psychic channels and the psychic winds, the mystical letters of the alphabet, the four initiations, the proper view and conduct, and the four magical activities (*phrin las bzhi*). These all represent topics pertaining to the Base (*gzhi*).

Thereafter follow eleven commentaries elucidating the chapters of the Second Tantra, on such topics as the Ganapuja, the Generation Process (*bskyed rim*), Mantra Recitation, the Perfection Process (*rdzogs rim*)

10. In the Yeshen Tantra (*ye gshen gyi rgyud*), there are five principal Tantras belonging to the class of Father Tantras (*pha rgyud*) and eight additional Tantras: (1) *Dbal gsas rngam pa* [*sku*], (2) *Lha rgod thog pa* [*gsung*], (3) *Gtso mchog mkha' 'gying* [*thugs*], (4) *Dbal chen ge khod* [*yon tan*], (5) *Dbal phur nag po* [*phrin las*], (6) *Khro bo ram pa*, (7) *Khro bo rol pa*, (8) *Khro bo 'bum pa*, (9) *Spyi 'dul*, (10) *Khyung dmar*, (11) *Khyung nag*, (12) *Gsang ba dbyings rol*, (13) *Rig pa khu byug*, (14) *Ma rgyud*.

consisting of Psychic Heat (*gtum mo*), Sleep Practice (*gnyid*), Dream Practice (*rmi lam*), Bardo (*bar do*), Chod (*gcod*), and Phowa (*'pho ba*), as well as the Path of Freedom (*thar lam*) or the preliminary practices, the Path of Ripening (*smin lam*) or Samaya vows, and the Path of Liberation (*grol lam*) or the principal practices. These are all topics pertaining to the Path. The commentary on the Bardo is no longer extant, nor is there any commentary provided to the Third Tantra. However, Shardza Rinpoche has written a commentary on this Third Tantra, entitled the *dGongs 'grel.*

B. Origin of the Mother Tantra according to the Tradition

1. Miraculous Career of the Prince Mi lus bsam legs

The story or hagiography of the royal prince and Shen practitioner rGyal gshen Mi lus bsam legs is found in general commentary *Nyi ma'i dkyil 'khor.*[13] Said to have been born in Tazik or Central Asia, he received the instructions for the three cycles of the Mother Tantra from three different sages:

(A) From Gshen spang la nam gshen he received Outer Mother Tantra Cycle of *Rnam dag padma klong gi dkyil 'khor,*

(B) from Seng ge'i sgra he received Inner Mother Tantra Cycle of *Kun gsal byams ma chen mo'i rgyud,* and

(C) from Lha bon yongs su dag pa he received Secret Mother Tantra Cycle of *Thugs rje nyi ma.*

Thereafter he is said to have received the full transmission for the secret cycle in a miraculous manner from the Yogini Bzang za ring btsun, because she was the actual custodian of the Tantra, being considered an emanation of Shes rab byams ma, the Perfection of Wisdom and Mother of all the Buddhas. This is the Tantra cycle we have here. From the Royal Shen the lineage of the Mother Tantra was transmitted to Dmu gshen nam mkha' snang ba'i mdog can of 'Ol mo gling (Zhang zhung phug pa or Inner Zhangzhung), then to Pandita A nu 'phrag thag, the Bonpo of Zhang zhung Bar pa (Middle Zhangzhung or Tazik), and finally to Sad ne ga'u, the Shenpo of Zhang zhung (Outer Zhangzhung or Northern Tibet). The latter, because of a persecution of Bon, concealed the texts of the Tantras, entrusting them to the care of Six Dakinis (*bya ra ma drug*).

2. The Terma Discoveries of Gu ru rNon rtse

According to Bon tradition, there were two persecutions of Bon and its practitioners in Central Tibet. The first occurred under the seventh Tibetan king Dri gum btsan po (traditional date c. 683 BC) and later in the 8th century under the great Buddhist king Khri srong lde btsan (c. 783 CE) during which times texts were hidden away for safe keeping. In later centuries, many of these were recovered and now they form the basis of the traditions of Yungdrung Bon, otherwise known as Old Bon.

Among these *gter ston* or "treasure-revealers" was Gu ru rNon rtse in the 12th century (b. 1136).[14] He is known in Buddhist histories as A ya Bon po lha 'bum and according to Jamgon Kongtrul, he discovered many Nyingmapa Termas as well as Bonpo ones.[15] He extracted these texts from the rock of Dung phor near the village of rTa nag on the north side of the Tsangpo river in Tsang province.

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11. Oral communication from Lopon Tenzin Namdak.

12. The edition used in this study is the reproduction of an *dbu med* manuscript that was brought by Lopon Tenzin Namdak from Tibet and republished in India by the Bonpo Monastic Center in 1971. It is indexed as K 81 in Per Kvaerne, "The Canon of the Tibetan Bonpos," Part Two: Index of the Canon, *Indo-Iranian Journal*, vol. XVI, The Hague 1974, pp. 9-144.

13. On Mi lus bsam legs, see Daniel Martin, *Mandala Cosmology. Human Body Good Thought and the Revelation of the Secret Mother Tantras of Bon*, Asiatische Forschungen Band 124, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 1994.

14. This date is from *Sangs rgyas kyi bstan rtsis ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng ba* by Nyi ma bstan 'dzin, Abbot of sMan ri Monastery, written in 1842. See Per Kvaerne, "A Chronological Table of the Bon-po: The bsTan rcis of Nyi-ma bstan-'jin," in *Acta Orientalia*, vol. 33, Copenhagen 1971, pp. 205-282.

15. Yon tan rgya mtsho ('Jam mgon Kong sprul) in his *Zab mo'i gter dang gter ston grub thob ji ltar byon- pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus bkod pa rin chen vaidurya'i phreng ba*, f 43a. See Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings*, ibid., p.166-167.

C. The Revelation of the Mother Tantra

1. Title and Homage

The title of the First Buddha Tantra is given both in the Zhangzhung language and in Tibetan:

"In the language of Zhang zhung: *U ye tha tson ma tra she rkya nri ri ku shu ha sangs kyin tantra*; and in the language of Tibet: *Gsang chen mthar thug ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma gzhi ye sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud*, that is, "The Ultimate Great Secret, the Mother Tantra which is the Sun of Compassion, the Tantra of the primordial Buddhahood of the Base."

This is followed by the Homage which invokes the Supreme Teacher Kun tu bZang po, the Dharmakaya and Primordial Buddha, who is the ultimate source of the Tantra teachings and of all revelation.

2. Preface: Setting the Time and Place

The first chapter of the root text is termed a Preface (*gleng gzhi*) because it sets the scene for the revelation of the text in terms of time, place, teacher, audience, circumstances and contents of the teaching. The Preface opens with the formula, "This speech was heard by me at one time," which is the traditional opening for a Buddhist Sutra. Then the setting and the circumstances for the revelation are presented, traditionally analyzed into five aspects: the place (*gnas*), the teacher (*ston pa*), the audience (*'khor*), the teaching (*bstan pa*), and the time (*dus*). In this case, the revelation occurs in a transcendent dimension outside of time and history.

3. Epiphany and Revelation

Iconographically, the Supreme Teacher, in this context of revealing the Tantras, appears with seven heads by means of which, speaking simultaneously, he reveals the various Tantra traditions.

Then there appeared 360 goddesses headed by Zangza Ringtsun, as well as 84,000 Naginis, 990,000 medicine goddesses (*sman mo*), and hosts of myriads of Dakinis who presented garlands of udumbara flowers to the Supreme Teacher. They represented the manifestations of the archetypal feminine. She and the goddesses made the request: "The compassion of the Supreme Teacher is like the sun (in the sky). To those Buddhas and practitioners who are all simultaneously your disciples, please expound in full the Mother Tantra, the King among the Secret Mantras, namely, the highest View, by way of elucidating the philosophical tenets regarding the Base, the clearest Meditation by way of the profound method of the sadhana of the Path, and the unsurpassed Goal by way of attaining the immediately present Fruit."

Thus, the spiritual path is not only laid out in terms of the Base, Path, and Fruit, as represent by the principal themes of the three Buddha Tantras, but also in terms of the view (*lta ba*), the meditation (*sgom pa*) and the conduct (*spyod pa*).

D. Structure of the Mother Tantra Text

1. Six Bases, Six Paths, and Six Fruits

Kun tu bZang po thereupon issued an edict proclaiming:

(A) The *Six Bases* (*gzhi drug*) that are spontaneously perfected (*lhun gyis grub pa*) and represent Primordial Buddhahood (*ye sangs rgyas*),

(B) the *Six Paths* (*lam drug*) that are actualized or realized in terms of siddhis (*dngos su grub pa*) and represent the Manifest Buddhahood or Buddhahood coming into manifestation (*mngon sangs rgyas*), and

(C) the *Six Goals* (*don drug*) that are realized as the Dharmadhatu (*dbyings su grub pa*) and represent Prefect Buddhahood (*rdzogs sangs rgyas*).

These eighteen topics represent "the profound teaching on complete liberation" and pertain to the Base, the Path, and the Fruit respectively.[16] Allotted among them are the forty-five essential points (*thig le zhe lnga*) of gnosis or primal cognitions.

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16. The Six Bases (*gzhi drug*) are as follows:

1. The Base of Everything (*kun gzhi*): philosophical tenets,
2. The Base of Appearances (*snag gzhi*): evolution and embryology,

2. Textual Elaborations

Each of these essential points (*thig le*) is expressed in a phrase having five key words. These form the content of the revelation in the Root Texts of the three Tantras and are elaborated upon in the commentaries traditionally said to have been written either by Mi lus bsam legs himself or by Gu ru rNon rtse. The individual chapters may contain one or more of these essential points.

Therefore, the entire Tantra cycle is systematically constructed around this outline:

(A) The Three Buddha Tantras correspond to the Base, Path, and Fruit,
(B) the eighteen topics of the Base, Path, and Fruit,
(C) the forty-five essential points, and
(D) the five key-words in each phrase.

The Ma rGyud is a very complex system in scholastic terms, thus it is not so popular and not so much practiced among the Bonpos nowadays as are the far more popular Yidam practices of Walse, Tsochok, and Phurpa.[17]

Part Three: Summary of the Contents of the *Ye Shes Thig Le*

A. Prologue: The Five Key Words

The Second Chapter of the Root Text is entitled "The Spontaneous Perfected Gnosis (or primal awareness) of the Basis of Everything, belonging to the Great Mystery Mother Tantra wherein is explained the Primordial Buddhahood of the Base" (*gzhi ye sang rgyas par bshad pa/ gsang chen ma rgyud/ kun gzhi ye shes lhun grub gyi le'u ste gnyis pa*). And the Commentary to this chapter, also found in the collection, is entitled "The Commentary on the Essential Point of Gnosis which teaches the Spontaneous Perfected Gnosis (or primal awareness) of the Basis of Everything (*ye shes thig le'i 'grel pa kun gzhi ye shes lhun grub bstan pa*). The title of the sub-commentary on this chapter composed by Lopon Tenzin Namdak is "Illumination upon the Path to Freedom, annotation and commentary on the Essential Points of Gnosis in the Mother Tantra" (*ma rgyud ye shes thig le'i mchan 'grel that lam rab gsal*).[18]

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3. The Base of Emptiness (*stong gzhi*): virtuous qualities of the Four Bodies,
4. The Base of the Transmission (*lung gzhi*): the initiations,
5. The Base of the Meaning (*don gzhi*): the view and conduct,
6. The Base of Action (*las gzhi*): ascetic conduct.

The Six Paths (*lam drug*) are as follows:

1. The Path of Accumulation (*tshogs lam*): performing the Ganapuja,
2. The Path of Unification (*sbyor lam*): practicing the Generation Process,
3. The Path of Vision (*mthong lam*): practicing mantra recitation,
4. The Path of Meditation (*sgom lam*): the Perfection Process in 6 Yogas,
5. The Path of Freedom (*thar lam*): the preliminary practices,
6. The Path of Maturation and Liberation (*smin grol lam*): main practice.

The Six Goals (*don drug*) are as follows:

1. The Supreme Fruit (*mchog 'bras*): explanation of Trikaya,
2. The Fruit of the Meaning (*don 'bras*): into to Natural State,
3. The Fruit of the meditation Session (*thun 'bras*): meditation instruction,
4. The Fruit of the State (*ngang 'bras*): realize compassion and wisdom,
5. The Fruit of the Vast Expanse (*klong 'bras*): realize the final form,
6. The Fruit of Non-existence (*med 'bras*): Dharmadhatu and Mahasukha.

17. Oral Communication from Lopon Tenzin Namdak.
18. The root text of Chapter Two is found in folia 13-24 and its commentary in folia 275-296. See Lopon Tenzin Namdak, *Ma rgyud ye shes thig le'i mchan 'grel thar lam rab gsal*: *An Expository Treatise on* Ma rGyud Ye Shes Thig Le (*The Wisdom Spots of Mother Tantra*) *Text belonging to the Bonpo Tantric System*, Bonpo Monastic Centre, Dolanji HP, n.d.

The prologue which opens this second chapter consists of a dialogue between the Primordial Buddha Kun tu bZang po and the Primordial Wisdom Kun tu bZang mo, wherein the later requests teachings from the former: "The gnosis of the philosophical tenets of all the Bon teachings is the basis for all doctrines and standpoints; therefore, please explain to us the Essential Point of this Gnosis (*ye shes thig le*)!" Thereupon Kun tu bZang po issues an edict, proclaiming: "This Essential Point of Gnosis is supreme among what is correct and clear," (*ye shes thig le yang dag gsal ba'i mchog*).

As noted above, in the Ma rGyud text an essential point (*thig le*) is expressed in five key words, each of which in turn is expanded into a commentary. According to the commentary, in terms of teaching and demonstrating the spontaneously perfection of the Base which is the Total Gnosis (*ye shes chen po'i gzhi lhun grub bstan pa*), there are five topics:

1. *Ye shes*: systematically establishing the Gnosis,
2. *Thig le*: recognizing the real meaning of the Unique Sphere,
3. *yang dag*: distinguishing among various views or systems of philosophical tenets,
4. *gsal ba*: focusing of the clarity of the senses (as valid cognitions), and
5. *mchog*: explanation of our own scripture, the Mother Tantra, which is the supreme system among philosophical tenets.

B. The Five Topics

1. First Topic: The Great Gnosis of the Base

The First Topic is that of systematically establishing the Gnosis of the Base which represents the Ultimate Truth. The first two topics present the essential view of the Ma rGyud, namely, the Base (*gzhi*), which is a state beyond cause and effect. According to the Commentary, this Total Gnosis which is the Base abides as spontaneously perfected (*gzhi ye shes chen po lhun grub du gnas pa*). Nevertheless, the Dimension of all Existence and the intrinsic Awareness of the Nature of Mind are inseparable from the very beginning (*bon nyid dbyings dang sems nyid rig pa dbyer med*). Therefore, they represent two sides of a single Ultimate Reality. In this way, the text seeks to establish the gnosis or knowledge of the Base in terms of Ultimate Truth. However, this Base is not something that can be known like an external object because it is Awareness in itself.

2. Second Topic: The Unique Sphere

The second topic is the recognition that the above Base is the Unique Sphere (*thig le nyag gcig*). Therefore, the Base, which is the state of Shunyata, represents the totality of both existence and non-existence. But Shunyata or emptiness is not just absence or a mere nothingness (*stong pa phyal chad*), because Shunyata and Awareness (*rig pa*) have been inseparable from time without beginning. Their inseparability (*dbyer med*) is the fundamental principle asserted here, and thereby the Ma rGyud seeks to avoid the danger of the one-sidedness expressed, for example, in Madhyamaka and in Chittamatra.

Moreover, the Base is precisely the same in an enlightened Buddha and in an ordinary deluded sentient being. There is no difference in terms of their essence; this Base is the Nature of Mind which is the source for both Samsara and Nirvana. The difference between an enlightened being and an ignorant being is whether or not one recognizes and understands this Primordial Base.

3: Third Topic: The Discussion of Philosophical Systems

(A) Ontology and Epistemology

The third topic is the making of special distinctions with regard to the correctness of the views of others, including both the views of Outsiders or Tirthikas and the views of Insiders, whether Buddhists or Bonpos. Because of the power of ignorance, there arise three causes for impurity in terms of view, namely, delusion, obscuration, and deviation (*'khrul sgrib gol gsum*). The Outsiders or Tirthikas are deluded (*'khrul pa*), possessing deluded views, because their philosophical ideas are erroneous, being afflicted with either eternalism (*rtag pa*) or nihilism (*chad pa*).

The Insiders are divided into the Causal Bon (*rgyu bon*) and the Fruitional Bon (*'bras bon*) within the Bonpo tradition itself. But some among these Insiders are obscured (*sgrib pa*), for they do not understand the Base and therefore they practice the Lower Vehicles. However, some other Insiders have deviated (*'gol ba*), wherein their views appear rather similar to the correct understanding, as found in the Ma rGyud, but they deviate because they meditate in a wrong way. According to the Commentary, our own view of "the great spontaneously perfected Gnosis of the Base" (*gzhi ye shes lhun grub chen po*) is the highest view among the nine systems of philosophical tenets represented by the Nine Ways of Bon. It is even more exalted than the tenet systems of the Tantras (whether A dkar or Ye gshen) and even of the Dzogchen found in the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud.*

Now the text proceeds to examine seven systems of philosophical tenets (*grub mtha'*), criticizing each and demonstrating their deficiencies while showing that the view of the Ma rGyud is superior. This is done by

(1) *dgag pa*: negating and refuting the opponent's assertions,
(2) *gzhag pa*: establishing one's own tenets or position, and
(3) *spong ba*: purifying one's own tenets, making them clear and refuting the criticisms of them by the opponent, thereby justifying one's own position.

(B) The Individual Philosophical Systems Considered

(1) Theistic View of the Shaivites

The Tirthika Outsiders adhere to an erroneous philosophical notion of a God called Maheshvara whom they define in terms of five theological assertions: (a) He is unique and single; (b) he pervades everywhere; (c) he is eternal; (d) he is beyond sorrow (Samsara); (e) he is an unconditioned entity, abiding even after death. These assertions are refuted logically one by one.

(2) Views of the Causal Bon

The three Causal Ways (*rgyu'i theg pa*) of Phywa gshen theg pa, sNang gshen theg pa, and Srid gshen theg pa are treated as a group; their perspectives represent philosophical views that are obscured (*sgrib pa'i grub mtha*), rather than deluded or completely erroneous. In essence, it is a question of the relationship of cause and effect. And their views are dualistic: they adhere to a naive realism and harbor a belief in the reality of the ego. The view of 'Phrul gshen theg pa is criticized separately, but much on the same basis regarding its dualistic thinking.

(3) Views of the Phanyulwas

Now we come to the Fruitional Ways, beginning with the Ways of Lay Practitioners and Monks (*dge bsnyed dang drang srong*); they are also known as the Phanyulwas (*'phan yul ba*). Phanyul refers to the principal Sutra system of Fruitional Bon, that is to say, the Prajnaparamita. These two ways assert that all effects result from causes. Over many kalpas, one can purify obscurations and accumulate merit by way of the practice of the ten perfections. One progresses gradually and when the kleshas become exhausted, eventually one will realize Buddhahood. This gradualist approach represents the obscured views of Insiders and the critique refers especially to their view of causality.

(4) View of "Mind-Only" in the Tantras of the Yeshenpas

Now the deviated views of Insiders who follow the Tantras are considered. Within the Greater Vehicle (Mahayana) of the Tantras, there are said to be four deviated positions which are asserted as philosophical tenets regarding the Ultimate Reality. These are presented here and below. Note that in the Bon system of classification, Chittamatra (*sems tsam*) and Madhyamaka (*dbu ma*) are associated with the followers of the Tantras, rather than with the Sutras, as is the case with Buddhism.

This first group of Tantric practitioners known as Yeshenpas (*ye gshen pa*) assert that all appearances or phenomena are Mind-Only (*snang ba thams cad sems tsam*) and that when Mind is purified, it becomes the state of Buddhahood. For this to occur, the Mind relies on the methods of the Secret Mantras, that is, the Tantric transformational practices of the Generation Process (*bskyed rim*) and the Perfection Process (*rdzogs rim*). Because all phenomenal existence is only mind and thought, being empty and without a self, by purifying phenomena into their lack of inherent nature, the purified Mind becomes Buddhahood.

To these assertions, the Ma rGyud replies that "mind," although empty, is not Buddhahood because it is the support of karma. Moreover, this mind or Alayavijnana is where the seeds of all kleshas are produced and stored, even though they abide as empty in terms of their essence. The Ma rGyud asserts that the Chittamatra position does not distinguish between *sems* and *ye shes*, thinking that they are one. Therefore, one cannot attain enlightenment because the Alayavijnana is contaminated by these karmic causes. Furthermore, it is conditioned and impermanent.

However, according to Lopon Tenzin Namdak's sub-commentary, the Yeshenpas are not true Chittamatrins, but actually follow a kind of Madhyamaka, though not the Prasangika version. This would appear to be the syncretistic school of Yogachara-Svatantrika Madyamaka that flourished in Tibet in the 8-11th centuries before the texts of Chandrakirti were translated into Tibetan.

(5) View of Kunzhi among the Ponsepas (Followers of Dzogchen)

According to the text, some practitioners belonging to the Mahayana (Tantra system) cling to philosophical tenets, asserting that the Kunzhi (*kun gzhi*) is the Base or the Ultimate Reality. They further assert that the Adibuddha Kun tu bZang po understood the Kunzhi, so he alone was liberated from the very beginning. This Kunzhi is unconditioned, so if one understands it, one attains Buddhahood. The Kunzhi according to Ultimate Truth is similar to the clear open sky. It is all-encompassing and totally all-pervading. Self-awareness (*rang rig*) is similar to the sun rising in the sky. Manas or the functional mind (*yid*) is like the coming and going of the winds and clouds. Sense consciousnesses (*dbang shes*) are pure self-manifestations like rainbows. The Kunzhi is source of everything and everything again dissolves into this dimension of pure awareness.

However the Ma rGyud criticizes this view. These Ponsepas (*dpon gsas pa*) fail to distinguish the Kunzhi from the Alayavijnana (*kun gzhi rnam shes*) which is the support for the karmic traces (*bag chags*) that come to contaminate it. The Ma rGyud then establishes its own case. Gnosis in Ultimate Truth is immaterial and insubstantial; it does not fall into any limitations or extremes. The Base which is our view, namely, Total Gnosis, transcends this Base which is their view. Even though as the Base it is one, Kunzhi is the base of the other vehicles as well, but Ma rGyud is the vehicle of the Base which is the Great Gnosis and teaches correctly the Base of the Primordial State.

According to the sub-commentary of Lopon Tenzin Namdak, the Ponsepas belonging to the Mahayana Tantra system indicated here refer to the practitioners of the Zhangzhung Nyangyud tradition. The texts of the Zhangzhung Nyangyud often use the term Kunzhi for the Natural State of the Nature of Mind (*sems nyid gnas lugs*). However, the Ma rGyud criticizes this implication, saying that this Kunzhi cannot be self-aware gnosis (*rang rig ye shes*) because these practitioners fail to distinguish the Kunzhi (*kun gzhi*) from the Alayavijnana (*kun gzhi rnam shes*), which is the support of karmic traces. Therefore, the enlightenment of the Buddha would be contaminated by them. The effect would return to the cause and the Buddha would fall back again into the delusions of Samsara. But the Dzogchenpas reply in the sub-commentary that they do in fact distinguish between the Kunzhi and the Alayavijnana and that the Kunzhi, being primordially pure in itself, is indeed the basis for both Samsara and Nirvana, not just the base for karmic traces. Therefore, according to the Lopon, this criticism of the Zhangzhung Nyangyud by the Ma rGyud does not stand.

(6) View of Shunyata in Madhyamaka

According to Lopon Tenzin Namdak, the view that Shunyata represents a total nothingness (*stong phyal chad gyi lta ba*) refers to the position of the Prasangika Madhyamikas who are seen as falling on to the side of nihilism (*chad lta ba*).

However, this Shunyata which is free of extremes (*stong pa mtha' bral*) is very similar to our own Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen rang lugs*) in the Ma rGyud, but the former tends to fall into the deviation of nihilism, the assertion that nothing exists. According to the text, the Prasangika Madhyamikas assert as a philosophical tenet the Shunyata where absolutely nothing at all exists (*grub mtha' stong pa phyal chad*). Therefore, there is no Ultimate Reality and consequently no Buddhahood to be attained. All appearances are visible to individual sentient beings only and they erroneously impute reality to them, for example, like reflections seen in a mirror. To this the Ma rGyud replies: Even though this Shunyata is indeed similar to our view, yet it

suffers from four defects (*zad shor phyal chad skyon bzhi*), namely: (a) exhaustion (*zad pa*), where visible appearances are devoid of gnosis or primal cognitions, like someone unconscious after fainting; (b) disappearance or loss (*shor ba*), where everything dissolves and disappears into Shunyata, like the spaced-out condition of the Arupadhatu Devas; (c) total nothingness (*phyal ba*), where nothing exists at all, being just like empty space; (d) annihilation (*chad pa*) or nihilism like the Outsider view of the materialists.

The Natural State is self-occurring and spontaneously perfected (*lhun grub rang babs kyi gnas lugs*), but Prasangikas do not assert that this is the Ultimate Reality and because that is not asserted, there is no Buddhahood to be attained. For the Prasangikas, this Shunyata alone is the Ultimate Truth, but this is not the case for those who practice the Tantras. In Madhyamaka, the two-fold Rupakaya is asserted to appear because of the power of the accumulation of merit. However, because it manifests naturally and spontaneously according to our system of the Ma rGyud, it cannot be just nothing (*stong pa tsam gyi med*). The Natural State is not just primordial purity or Shunyata, it is equally luminous clarity and spontaneously perfection. These two sides have been inseparable from the very beginning and there is no cause for this, such as the accumulation of merit. Moreover, Rigpa may be interrupted (or temporarily diminished), but it can never fall into exhaustion nor annihilation. Here there is found a contradiction between Madhyamaka and Dzogchen according to the sub-commentary:

(7) View of the Jnyanasattva in the Tantras of the Akarwas

The Akarwas expound the doctrine of the Wisdom Being or Jnyanasattva. They assert that, when they practice meditation, this deity is invoked as "a Deity of Gnosis who guides the mind", which comes from elsewhere or which resides in the dimension of the Dharmadhatu. And because one practices this unification of Wisdom Being (*ye shes pa*) and Symbolic Being (*dam tshig pa*), one comes to attain Buddhahood.

The philosophical tenets asserted by some Akarwas and some Chathunpas of the Mahayana belong only to a section of the Secret Mantras system. The terms Akarwa (*a dkar ba*) and Chathunpa (*cha mthun pa*) indicate the practitioners of Kriya Tantra and Charya Tantra respectively. In general the term Akarwa refers to practitioners of the Lower Tantras and the term Yeshenpas to practitioners of the Higher Tantras. But while the Lower Tantras possess the method of the Jnyanasattva, they do not possess the methods of the generation and the perfection processes found only in the Higher Tantras. Thus, the criticism found here applies only to the Akarwa view.

According to the Ma rGyud, if one does not know that the Jnyanasattva has existed within oneself from the very beginning, and only now one remembers and clearly visualizes it, but thinks that it comes from outside, it will not be possible for the Jnyanasattva and Samayasattva to merge into one. It will be like trying to mix water and oil. Rather, according to the Ma rGyud, the Jnyanasattva is self-awareness of oneself as the Yidam or meditation deity; it is only that one has forgotten it. Therefore, Tantric sadhana represents a method for remembering oneself as the Yidam by way of the practices of the generation process and the perfection process.

In conclusion, according to the text, even though elsewhere in the other Lower Vehicles, the view of the Base has been afflicted with delusion, obscuration, and deviation, the Base in itself, as expounded in the Ma rGyud, is immaculate and self-originated. This Base is Primordial Buddhahood, the Nature of Mind, and the Primordial State of Kun tu bZang po.

4. Fourth Topic: Clarity (Epistemology)

(A) Clarity and the Senses

The term clarity (*gsal ba*) refers to the unimpaired functioning of the senses and to direct perception (*mngon sum*). Because it is experienced by the primal cognitions of self-awareness (*rang rig pa'i ye shes*), it is said to be clear (*gsal ba*). The basis for clarity is the Total Gnosis which is self-originated (*rang byung ye shes*). If this were not clear, no other clarity would be possible. Everything in the world would be in total darkness, like there being no sun in the sky. This represents the clarity of the gnosis of self-awareness.

(B) The Necessity for Valid Cognitions of Direct Perceptions

The gnosis of the Base is made clear in this way. But if one wants to focus on it, it is necessary to engage in Pramana or valid cognitions (*tshad ma*). How can one understand correctly the view when one thinks wrongly? One will not overcome doubts; therefore one must use valid cognitions in order to be free of error and defects.

It is necessary to understand by means of a valid cognition of direct perception (*mngon sum tshad ma*) where one attains a thought that understands the object from proof of sufficient reason (siddhapaksha, *sgrub phyogs*). In this way, one can evaluate the fruits of Samsara and Nirvana. Furthermore, the method of direct perception (pratyaksha, *mngon sum*) is applied within the Four Portals, whereas understanding by way of inference (anumana, *rjes dpag*) is applied in the Treasury.

(C) Direct Perception in the Four Portals of Bon

According to the Commentary, each of the Four Portals (*bon sgo bzhi*) has its proper activity. The sub-commentary asserts that it is necessary to apprehend the ultimate Natural State by means of the valid cognition of direct perception (or immediate intuition) because the Ultimate Reality transcends conception by the intellect and expression in words. The method for understanding by way of direct perception is represented by the Four Portals and there are four modes of direct perception to be considered here:

(1) With the fleshly eye one sees colors,
(2) with the eye of Manas one sees activities or karma,
(3) with eye of clear self-awareness one see gnosis (*ye shes*), and
(4) with the eye of the Nature of Mind one sees the Dharmakaya.

If the Natural State is only understood by self-awareness, does this not make the other three valid cognitions unnecessary and without purpose? Not according to the Commentary because one needs to know right actions, renounce the emotional defilements, obtain a human body, understand the view, and free our own system of tenets from defects.

(1) *Chab nag*

Direct perception by the sense faculties (*dbang po'i mngon sum*) is the method of apprehension proper to Chab nag, that is to ritualism, magic and exorcism. The sense faculties only perceive a Relative Truth which distinguishes good and bad. Indeed, Chab nag was taught for sake of people with inferior faculties. Therefore, karma and scripture (*las lung*) were not taught here because the Chagnagpas conduct themselves in accordance with the everyday kleshas or emotional defilements.

Moreover, one should not confuse the direct perception in Chab nag with the Thodgal practice in Dzogchen. According to the sub-commentary, the Dzogchenpa may also rely on the senses for visions in terms of Thodgal practice, but what one sees in this case is gnosis. The Chagnagpa possesses only the fleshly eye, not eye of gnosis (*ye shes kyi spyan*).

(2) *'Phan yul*

Direct perception by means of Manas (*yid kyi mngon sum*) apprehends 'Phan yul, the Prajnaparamita Sutra system. It apprehends valid cognitions as spiritual forms visible only to consciousness, but not to the material eye. 'Phan yul was taught for sake of people with middling capacity. It teaches conduct that renounces the kleshas by way of ten virtues, thereby actions brought under control and kleshas renounced. Indeed, one creates some good karma, but still one grasps, especially there is grasping at a mental body. Nevertheless, it apprehends the mental body (*yid kyi lus*), karmic traces, spiritual forms such as the moral precepts, and so on. Thereby one is able to guard one's vows.

(3) *Chab dkar*

Direct perception by way of self-awareness (*rang rig mngon sum*) enters into the real meaning of Chab dkar, the real subject matter of the Tantra system (*a dkar theg pa*). It does not perceive or accept as Ultimate Truth the objects of mind of the Lower Vehicles. It is taught for the benefit of people of superior intellectual capacity. The fruit is the obtaining of a divine body possessing direct perception by way of self-awareness. This mind-made illusion body (*sgyu lus*), comprised of mind and subtle prana, is the result of Yidam practice

and represents the culmination of the Tantric process of transformation. Nevertheless, this is still illusion and not the Ultimate Truth.

(4) *dPon gsas*

Direct perception by way of the Nature of Mind (*sems nyid mngon sum*), according to the Ponsepas, comes to understand the Jnanakaya. It is taught for sake of people of exceedingly superior intellectual capacity. This represents the immediate intuition of the Ultimate Truth.

According to the sub-commentary, this represents the Portal of the Upadeshas. Its activity is samadhi or contemplation and this intuition cuts the roots of the emotional defilements at their source. The deluded minds of the eight lower vehicles still engage in thinking, but self-originated gnosis sees clearly without thoughts and concepts. Even though self-awareness arises clearly, making the eight other vehicles into its helpers, still these eight levels of thoughts are deluded and represent discursive thoughts, so there exists the necessity for the ninth vehicle beyond the mind and beyond discursive thoughts.

(D) Inference Associated with the Treasury

The Treasury is investigated by way of the valid cognitions of inference (anumana pramana, *rjes pag tshad ma*); whereupon one will come to understand it by way of pure discriminating wisdom (*shes rab*). When practicing the Treasury, matters are not seen by direct perception, but evaluated in terms of inference. And in terms of inference, one comes to understand by way of sufficiency, engagement, and reversal:

(1) Sufficiency (*zhug pa*) apprehends a single sufficient reason or cause (pakshadharma, *phyogs bon*), with respect to the object of knowledge. For example, "Where there is smoke, there is fire." Smoke is the sufficient reason to infer the existence of fire, though the fire is not directly perceived.

(2) As for engagement (*'jug pa*), because one becomes habitual in the employing of examples of its occurrence, subsequently one becomes certain. For example, smoke always accompanies the fire in a stove. This represents positive pervasion (anvaya-vyapti, *rjes khyab*).

(3) As for reversal (*ldog pa*), here one cites the opposite case. When circumstances do not agree with this assertion (or paksha), then it does not exist with respect to the sufficient reason. "If there is no fire, then smoke cannot exist, as for example, fire is not possible in the ocean, therefore there is no smoke there." This represents negative pervasion (vyatireka-vyapti, *ldog khyab*). Thereby inference is arranged systematically and by relying on these three methods (*tshul gsum*), one comes to understand the object by means of inference.

(E) Defects of Mind

For the Chagnagpa, the natural disposition of the senses is deluded because of the presence of karmic traces. Appearances are quickly regarded as enemies and one feels threatened by the spirits, whereupon angry thoughts arise.

In terms of mental perception for the Phanyulwa, the deluded mind suffers in Samsara. But this deluded mind is deceived by the Manas, the three humors, and the eight classes of spirits, and so on.

In terms of direct perception of self-awareness as valid cognition for the Chabkarwa, the natural disposition of self-awareness may become deluded, thinking the world is like a dream or illusion and becoming obsessed with the signs of practice, such as visions and omens.

Direct perception by way of the Nature of Mind is the valid cognition of Ponsepas who practice Dzogchen. Yet they may also enter into delusion by way of grasping at the characteristics of objects and by distractions of mind due to one's own awareness; such as appearances moving during the most-meditation experience (*rjes thob*).

5. Fifth Topic: The Supreme Philosophical System

Finally, there is the explanation of our own scripture (the Ma rGyud) which is the supreme philosophical system. And among all Bases, it is the Base of the *Ye shes thig le* which is supreme and this Base is the Total Gnosis (*ye shes chen po*).

According to the view of the Total Gnosis in our own system, what is looked at is self-originated gnosis (*rang byung ye shes*) and the one who looks is self-aware gnosis (*rang rig ye shes*). This instruction on the method for non-deceived looking (*lta thabs mi bslu ba'i gdams ngag*) explicates the other philosophical systems and thereby conceptual elaborations are cut off. And because it teaches the method of looking as a valid cognition, doubts are pacified. When one cleanses the defects of perverted and deluded thoughts, then no basis for delusion remains. The self-originated gnosis of the Base is systematically established by means of scripture citations and by reasoning (*lung dang rig pa*); this produces a certain knowledge (*nges shes*), cleansing the defects of mind by means of valid cognitions. Thereby one comes to directly apprehend the real meaning of the Natural State. By means of the gnosis of self-awareness, one understands the self-originated gnosis of the Base.

Part Four: Concluding Discussion

Terma represents a process of continuing revelation, a link with the primordial past, the time of the beginning when the Dharma was first revealed to humanity. Thus, the Ma rGyud is placed in the mouth of the Primordial Buddha Kun tu bZang po. Linked to the original source of the sacred, Terma brings the sacred to bare on contemporary questions. By way of this Terma, Gu ru rNon rtse provided the Bonpos with a Mother Tantra presented as a primordial revelation and, therefore, a scripture of ultimate authority.

The Ma rGyud represents a well planned and elaborated scholastic literature, in contrast to the "lecture notes" style of certain Buddhist Tantras of Indian origin, such as the *Hevajra Tantra*. Indeed, the Ma rGyud represents a scholastic project of intellectual synthesis reminiscent of the Buddhist *Kalachakra Tantra*, sometimes also classified as a Mother Tantra. In this period of the 11th and 12th centuries, the Anuttara Tantras, especially the Heruka Tantras or Mother Tantras, were introduced as new translations from Sanskrit into Tibetan and they grew in popularity among Tibetan schools and monasteries. For example, one may speak of the prominence of the New Tantra translations of the *Hevajra Tantra* of Virupa and 'Brog mi among the Sakyapas and the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* of Tilopa and Naropa among the Kagyudpas. The discoveries of Gu ru rNon rtse provided the Bonpos with a Mother Tantra of their own, complete with sophisticated Dzogrim techniques, and a discussion of systems of philosophical tenets, as well as of logic and epistemology, precisely at the time when all this was the intellectual fashion among the Tibetan Buddhists. Moreover, this Bonpo Mother Tantra seeks to provide a synthesis of the entire Bonpo Tantra system that complements and goes beyond the older Father Tantras and which comprehensively develops Dzogrim practice. This was the time when Mother Tantra was in the air; its psychic technology was "hot," with its principal emphasis on Dzogrim practices such as Tummo, and so on. Consequently, the Ma rGyud has the most extensive Dzogrim section found in any Bonpo Tantra.

Also in this era of the New Translations, the Prasangika Madhyamaka system was introduced into Tibet by Spa tshab Lo tswa ba Nyi ma grags, who translated the principal texts of this system into Tibetan, including the famous *Prasannapada* of Chandrakirti. A native of Phanyul, Spa tshab Lo tswa ba went to Kashmir as a boy in 1137, Gu ru rNon rtse being born the year before in 1136. The former studied with many scholars in India for twenty-three years and returning to Tibet, he taught the six treatises of Nagarjuna and translated the *Prasannapada* and the *Madhyamakavatara* with its autocommentary. He gathered about him many disciples.[19] In time Prasangika Madhyamaka became the intellectual fashion in Tibet and replaced the earlier ecclectic Yogachara-Svatantrika Madhyamaka of Shantirakshita. Even today Prasangika Madhyamaka is the official philosophy and party line of all the Tibetan schools, including the Nyingmapas and Bonpos, at least in terms of Sutra system studies.

But some Indian and Tibetan Buddhist philosophers felt the need on occasion to adopt the Svatantrika mode of argument in order to establish Shunyata. These scholars accepted the Madhyamaka view regarding the Ultimate Truth, but the Yogachara or Sautrantika view with regard to phenomena. This is true of the

19. George Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, Part I-II, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi reprint 1979, pp. 230, 236, 272, 341-2, 344, 350.

eclectic school of Shantirakshita. The style of argument in early Dzogchen texts and here in the Ma rGyud is more connected with this Yogachara-Svatantrika Madhyamaka trend where one can employ independent arguments, syllogisms, and valid cognitions in the discussion with opponents. Therefore, one may speak in a more positive way regarding the Ultimate Reality, such as, for example, "total primordial purity" (*ka dag chen po*), without falling into the extreme of eternalism or substantializing reality.

What is the difference in the view of Shunyata between Madhyamaka and Dzogchen? According to the sub-commentary, although Shunyata corresponds to primordial purity (*ka dag*), Dzogchen does not separate this from spontaneous perfection (*lhun grub*). Shunyata is not simply an inert vacuum; *lhun grub* represents its energetic side. Moreover, in the Sutra system, one apprehends Shunyata as a concept, whereas in Dzogchen, it remains an immediate experience. In Sutra, one's search for Shunyata never ends. This represents grasping at Shunyata (*stong pa 'dzin pa*), whereas Dzogchen does not grasp at Shunyata. This Sutric knowledge of Shunyata is inferential; it is not a direct perception. According to Sutra, one must go through an inferential cognition to get at Shunyata, but according to Dzogchen, one cannot use concepts to go beyond concepts. Just as one cannot wash blood off one's hands with more blood. The only way to understand Shunyata is to have no inferential cognitions – the only way is by means of Rigpa and this understanding represents a direct perception or immediate intuition that is beyond words.

In 6th century, Dignaga rejected the five member syllogism of Nyaya logic as being clumsy and defective and formulated a different three member syllogism which was more formal in terms of the criteria for the validity of arguments. The Ma rGyud and other contemporary Bonpo texts employ this syllogism of Dignaga (*tshul gsum*). However, the Ma rGyud asserts that this syllogism was not an innovation of Dignaga, building on an earlier human tradition of logic, but a direct revelation of the Primordial Buddha Kun tu bZan gpo himself. Thus, the Bonpo tradition attributes Buddhistic logic to the Primordial Buddha, not to Dignaga and Dharmakirti, and claims that its logic is older.

In this period, logic, epistemology, and philosophical tenets were discussed and elaborated at Sa skya. It was the leading Tibetan monastic university of the time. Open to the new Indian Buddhist influences, especially in terms of Anuttara Tantra, Sa skya also became foremost in the development of logic and epistemology in the Tibetan context. The impact of this new logic and epistemology is clearly seen in the Ma rGyud. Bonpo monastic education in terms of *mTshan nyid*, or philosophy,[20] with the emphasis on Madhyamaka, Tarka, and Pramana, and its training in and examination through debate for its Geshes nowadays appears very similar to the Gelugpa educational system. Geshes from sMan ri monastery were sent to Drepung in the last centuries for their post-graduate studies and to sharpen their debating skills. But in the 11th through 13th centuries, the Bonpo Geshes were sent to Sa skya, which at that time was at the center of intellectual developments in Tibet. Among the Bonpos, g.Yas ru dBen sa kha was the principal center of Bonpo scholastic activity. It thrived under the patronage of the Dru clan, just as Sa skya did under the 'Khon family. The two monasteries were located close to each other geographically in the Tsang region.

Thus, the Ma rGyud, as we have it here, appears to be very much a product of the 11th and 12th centuries renaissance in Central Tibet. If not the actual author of the root texts, Gu ru rNon rtse was certainly instrumental in editing them and compiling their commentaries, a fact witnessed by his complaining of weariness over struggling with the Terma text to his disciple Zhonnu Bum. The later was probably the author of the general commentary that follows the root texts.

20. See Krystyna Cech, "History, Teaching, and Practice of Dialectics according to the Bon Tradition," in *Tibet Journal* 11, no. 2, 1986, pp.3-28.

THE WRITINGS OF ZHABS DKAR TSHOGS DRUG RANG GROL (1781-1851). A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

Matthieu Ricard

Since the publication of the English translation of the autobiography of Shabkar (*zhabs dkar*),[1] almost all the writings of this great master have been rediscovered – chiefly at his seat in the valley of Rebkong (*reb gong*) in the province of Amdo (*a mdo*) in north-eastern Tibet, but also in central Tibet and Nepal. As a result of collaboration between the holders of Shabkar's lineage in Amdo, and Shechen (*zhe chen*) monastery in Nepal, the creation of a complete edition of the *Collected Writings* has now become possible. This has been published both in the Qinhai province (in a 12 volume book edition) and in India (in a 14 volume *dpe cha* edition) by *Shechen Publications*, in 2003.

According to an inventory of the Writings (see SH 179) once preserved in Shabkar's own library at his seat at Yama Tashikhyil (*g.ya' ma bkra shis 'khyil*), it appears that, save for a few minor texts and an anthology of quotations (SH 102), all the major works have been recovered. In view of this, and in the interests of future research, it seemed useful to create a numerical referencing system for the works now available.

The present catalogue includes one hundred and eighty titles from Shabkar's *Collected Works* (SH 1 to 180, see *dkar chag* SH 180), a number of manuscripts of early editions of various texts that were later included in the *Works* (SH-MAN 1-7), and some supplementary texts (*rgyab chos*, TP 1-13) from the *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu* cycle of teachings rediscovered by Terchen Kunzang Dechen Gyalpo (*gter chen kun bzang bde chen rgyal po*, born in 1736).

It is particularly appropriate that this catalogue is published in a volume in homage to Gene Smith, since it was Gene who first opened our eyes to the works of Shabkar in the 1970's, by telling us that Shabkar's *rnam thar* was, in his opinion, the most inspiring biography in Tibetan literature.

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Although we have not discovered an ordered list of Shabkar's writings that might have been created during his lifetime, a manuscript inventory of his works has survived. Furthermore, with a few notable exceptions, most of the major texts are also mentioned and dated in Shabkar's autobiography or other writings.

In 1988, Jigme Thekchog (*'jigs med theg mchog* – 1951-2001), an eminent scholar from *rong po dgon chen* who had been the tutor of Shabkar's 4th incarnation, included a partial list of the master's writings in his history of *rong po* monastery.[2] Subsequently, in 1993, the late Pal Gyalkar (*dpal rgyal mkhar*) compiled a more extensive list and a collection of excerpts of Shabkar's works, together with an excellent analysis of his style.[3] This is at the moment best study of Shabkar in the Tibetan language. The Shechen edition of

1. Ricard, Matthieu, Jakob Leschly, Erik Schmidt, Marilyn Silverstone & Ani Lodrö Palmo, *(trans.)*, and Constance Wilkinson (ed.), *The Life of Shabkar, The Autobiography of a Tibetan Yogi*, S.U.N.Y. Press, 1994, reprinted by Snow Lion, 2001.
2. In his *rong po dgon chen gyi gdan rabs rdzogs ldan gtam gyi rang sgrags* (Xining: Qinghai Nationalities Press, 1988. p. 646), *'jigs med theg mchog* considers twenty-two major works of zhabs dkar: nine *sprul pa'i glegs bam*, four *legs bshad*, three *chos bshad*, three *lta mgur* and four *rnam mgur* (autobiographical songs). In a later personal communication, he structured the main works in nine *sprul pa'i glegs bam*, three *chos bshad*, three *legs bshad*, three *gdams ngag* and three *lta ba'i mgur*, which is the order we have followed in the present edition.
3. Pal Gyalkar *(dpal rgyal mkhar*, d. 2000): "*bya gtang chen po zhabs dkar tshogs drug rang grol ba'i phyag rtsom gyi che ba bzhad pa'i me tog.*" In *bod kyi shes rig dpyad rtsom phyogs bsgrigs blo gsal bung ba 'dren pa'i dpyid kyi pho nya*, Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House (*krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang*), 1992, vol. 3: 1-56. From the same author, see also *rje zhabs dkar ba'i mgur glu'i bsam blo'i rang bzhin skor rags gleng ba*. In *krung go'i bod kyi shes rig*, 1989, 4: 132-40.

Shabkar's work was made possible through the dedicated efforts and collaboration of Urgyen Jigme Tenpa'i Gyaltsen (*o rgyan 'jigs med bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan*), Shabkar's fourth incarnation, born in 1980; of Tenpa Gyatso (*bstan pa rgya mtsho*), a senior monk of Yama Tashikhyil (*g.ya ma bkra shis 'khyil*); of Yundrung Gyal (*g.yung drung rgyal*), the nephew of the famous scholar Gendun Chöpel (*dge 'dun chos 'phel*); of Jigme Thekchog (*jigs med theg mchog*), mentioned above; and Konchog Palmo, (*dkon mchog dpal mo*) a western disciple of Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (*skyabs rje dil mgo mkhyen brtse rin po che*, 1910-1991), all of whom have been active over the years in gathering Shabkar's writings in the Rebkong area. We ourselves visited the area on three separate occasions. We were also given a number of texts found in northern Nepal by Sengdrak Rinpoche (*seng 'grags rin po che*) and Pema Gyurme (*padma 'gyur med*). Through these combined efforts, almost the whole of Shabkar's works have been collected and preserved.

In the case of many of the texts, excellent wood-blocks were kept at the temple-hermitage of Yama Tashikhyil (*g.ya' ma bkra shis 'khyil*) – henceforth referred to as TK – near Showong (*zho 'ong*, nowadays pronounced "sho-pong") in Rebkong. The carving of most of them was organized by Sangye Rinchen (*sangs rgyas rin chen*), one of the author's close disciples. Although these wood-blocks were burned during the Cultural Revolution, at least one print of each volume has survived. Several volumes of manuscripts, some of which are in Shabkar's own hand, have also been preserved in the same area.

Xylographs for a few volumes were also carved at Shugsep (*shug gseb*) monastery in central Tibet under the auspices of the famous lady teacher Shugsep Jetsun Chönyi Sangmo (*shug gseb rje btsun chos nyid bzang mo* – 1852-1953), who was a holder of Shabkar's teachings and transmitted them in the central provinces. Alas, these xylographs were also destroyed and only a few prints have survived.

According to word of mouth information from Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche (*mkhas btsun bzang po rin po che*), several manuscript volumes of Shabkar's works were preserved at Parthang Rinchen Ding (*bar thang rin chen lding*) at the foot of the mountain of Jomo Kharak (*jo mo kha rag*) in central Tibet, the residence for several years of Shabkar's close disciple Kalden Rangdrol (*skal ldan rang grol*). This monastery was destroyed with all its treasures.

A few manuscripts of Shabkar's writings were passed down through his disciple Jinpa Norbu (*sbyin pa nor bu*), who lived with Shabkar on Mount Kailash, in Lapchi (*la phyi*) and elsewhere. Holders of Jinpa Norbu's lineage have preserved these manuscripts in Dolpo Tarap in Nepal.

The xylographic edition of Shabkar's writings was arranged in ten volumes identified by the Tibetan letters *Ka* through *Ta*, the last volume being marked *Om*. This collection begins with the two volumes of Shabkar's autobiography, continues with the *mgur 'bum* followed by the general Mahayana teachings and concludes with texts on the Vajrayana and *rdzogs chen*. Many important works, on the other hand, are without alphabetical reference and existed only in manuscript form.

A few volumes of writings were published in India in the 1970's and 80's. Some of these were reprinted from xylographic prints of the TK edition, others from the often flawed manuscripts found in northern Nepal.

In 1985, the Qinhai Nationalities Press (*mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe mdzod khang*) published the two volumes of the biography (*rnam thar*) in 1985, followed by the two volumes of the *mgur 'bum* in 1988. In 2002, Shabkar's 4th incarnation published ten volumes of a new edition of the Works, due to be completed, in 2003, with two volumes of liturgical texts.

The Shechen edition presented in *dpe cha* format was prepared at Shechen Monastery in Nepal. Except for the biography and the first volume of the *mgur 'bum*, for which we have used original xylographic prints, the texts have been twice entered on computer and then compared in order to eliminate typographic errors. They were then proof-read by Alak Zenkar Rinpoche (Tudeng Nima) and by Dagpo Tulku Rinpoche (Sonam Gyaltsen), and, in the case of a few texts (i.e. *snying rje sprul pa'i leg bam* and *legs bshad kun bzang mchod sprin)*, by Jigme Thekchog.

After consultation with eminent scholars (in particular Jigme Thekchog), regarding the best way to organize the texts, we have placed the works in the following order: the biographies (*rnam thar*), the collected songs (*mgur 'bum*), the nine *sprul pa'i glegs bam*, the three *chos bshad*, the three *legs bshad*, the three *gdams ngag* and the three *lta ba'i mgur gsum*, followed by various instructions (*khrid yig*), liturgical pieces (*'don cha*) and the general list of contents (*dkar chag*).

Chronology

A significant number of Shabkar's principal writings are dated. The *mkha' lding gshog rlabs*, possibly his most celebrated work, is also one of his earliest, composed in 1807 on the Tsonying Island (*mtsho snying*), in the Lake Kokonor. It was there also that, in 1808, he wrote the *lam rim gsal ba'i sgron me*.

After travelling to Central Tibet, Shabkar wrote the *chos bshad gzhan phan nyi ma* (1811) at Chölung (*chos lung*). In 1812, in Tsari (*tsa ri*), he composed the *chos bshad gzhan phan zla ba* and *gzhan phan nor bu*, as well as the *legs bshad kun bzang mchod sprin*. The *bka' gdams* and *'jam dbyangs sprul pa'i glegs bam* were composed at Mt Kailash (1815), and, at nearby Purang (*spu rang*), the *ngo mtshar sprul pa'i glegs bam* in 1817-8. These were followed, in 1819 at Lapchi (*la phyi*), by the *rgyal sras sprul pa'i glegs bam* and, in 1825, by the *ya mtshan sprul pa'i glegs bam* written at Khardo (*mkhar do*), near Lhasa.

Returning to Amdo, Shabkar committed to writing in 1837 the first part of his autobiography. Most of his remaining works were written at Yama Tashikhyil (*g.ya ma bkra shis 'khyil*). These include the *gdams ngag gser gyi ri bo* and the *o rgyan sprul pa'i glegs bam*, around 1845, and the *snying rje sprul pa'i glegs bam* in 1846.

Although they are not dated, the *rmad byung* and *dag snang sprul pa'i glegs bam*, were also written at Tashikhyil, and the *legs bshad bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun* at nearby Drong Lung (*'brong lung*).

Shabkar's Literary Style

Shabkar's rich and varied style ranks among the clearest and most beautiful in Tibetan literature. The hermit-poet composed in a lively, often colloquial manner, expressing in colorful detail the truths of the contemplative life. Frequently adopting the literary style known as *sgrung bshad*, namely, the weaving together of scriptural texts with anecdotes taken from everyday life, Shabkar skilfully presents the Buddhist teachings with great energy and freshness. Despite his amazing erudition, his main interest is not in theoretical knowledge but in the transmission of the essential teachings in a lively and engaging way.

Whereas he makes free use of quotations from past masters, his own explanations are expressed in a vigorous, lucid manner without lapsing into pedantry – a style that was to be imitated by a number of other writers, notably Dza Patrul Rinpoche (*dza dpal sprul rin po che* – 1808-1887), who contributed to the great revival of Tibetan Buddhism in the nineteenth-century.

Shabkar's spiritual songs are a good example of his extraordinary talent for reading the outer world as a guide for the inner life. Lofty white peaks, for example, or immaculate clouds prompt him see his beloved teachers seated on them, magnificent and radiant. A transparent, luminous sky enhances his realization of the view of the Great Perfection. The change of seasons and the withering of flowers inspire him with melancholy and remind him of impermanence and death. The murmur of cascading streams, the whistling of the wind, and the songs of birds, call to his mind the words of the teachings and his conversations with his spiritual masters and friends:

Just as silvery mist rises
Into the vast, empty firmament,
Will not the form of the lord my guru
Appear in the immensity of all-pervading space?

Just as gentle rain slowly descends
Within the beautiful arc of a rainbow,
Will not the guru shower down profound teachings
Within a dome of five-colored light?

Just as rainwater remains
Upon the even ground of a broad meadow,
Will not these teachings remain in the mind
Of your faithful and devoted son?

Just as brilliantly colored flowers
Spring up across the lush, soft moorland,
Will not spiritual experiences and realization
Arise in your son's mindstream?
(SH 8, Vol. 4, p. 405)

Some of his verses display astonishing technical virtuosity. For example, he will sometimes construct an entire poem using a single vowel. For example "u":

khu byug 'du lung sgrub phug gzungs/ /rgyun du sku gsung thugs gsum bkur/ /phul byung thub gsung du kun sgrubs/ /zung 'jug sku gsum myur 'grub 'gyur// (SH 8, Vol. 4, p. 434).

or "e":

bshes gnyen legs bsten bde chen 'dren/ /theg chen sems bskyed bde gshegs brnyes/ /dge byed khe che bde legs 'phel/ /skye med de shes bde ster nges// (*ibid.* p. 435).

On other occasions, all the words will be marked with *ya btags*:

rgyal mkhyen phyogs brgyas phyag byas skyob/ /skyabs rgyal mkhyen rgyas phyag brkyangs kyis/ /rgyal spyod skyong phyin phyis skyid myong / /skyid myong bya byed rgya bskyed gyis/ (*ibid.* p. 436).

or *ra btags*:

'brel 'brel spro brod 'gro 'dren sras/ /spro brod 'gro 'dren sras 'brel 'grogs/ /phrad phrad srog 'phrog 'gran bral dgra/ /srog 'phrog 'gran bral dgrar skrag bros/ (*ibid.* p. 436).

He even composed a poem consisting entirely of palindromes (verses that can be read forward or backward) (*ibid.* p. 438)!

Shabkar has often been compared with Milarepa not only for his way of life and his spiritual accomplishments, but also for his amazing ability to improvise songs on the spare of the moment. From down-to-earth advice on ethics and conduct, or highly ornate poetry sent to spiritual masters and kings, to songs setting forth the vastness of the *rdzogs chen* view, each song and poem has a particular flavor. In whatever style he chooses to adopt, Shabkar displays an effortless mastery of the art of Tibetan composition.

The Writings

We have ascribed reference numbers (SH) to each of the works described below.

VOLUME 1

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHIES (rang rnam)

• SH 1: *rnam thar stod cha.* Vol. 1 (Ka): 1-970. Autobiography Part 1 (thereafter referred to as NAM): *snyigs dus 'gro ba yongs kyi skyabs mgon zhabs dkar rdo rje 'chang chen po'i rnam par thar pa rgyas par bshad pa skal bzang gdul bya thar 'dod rnams kyi re ba skong ba'i yid bzhin gyi nor bu bsam 'phel dbang gi rgyal po* [The King of Wish-Granting Jewels].

This volume was also published at Dolanji, by Tsering Wangyal, 1975; as Vols. 1 and 2 of the incomplete edition of the *Collected Works of Zhabs dkar tshogs drug rang grol*: Paro: Lama Ngodrup and Sherap Drimey, 1980 (thereafter referred to as CWP, for "Collected Works, Paro Edition"). Also Xining: Qinghai Nationalities Press (*mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe mdzod khang*, thereafter referred to as QH) 1985: 1-1097, and finally the 2002 edition of the same *mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe mdzod khang*: 1-1119.

VOLUME 2

• SH 2: *rnam thar smad cha.* Vol. 2 (kha): 1-690. Autobiography Part II. *'gro mgon zhabs dkar ba'i sku tshe'i smad kyi rnam thar thog mtha'i bar du dge ba yid bzhin nor bu dgos 'dod kun 'byung.* Completed by a posthumous section written by *spyang lung sprul sku khyab brdal klong yangs*. Second part of volume Ka of TK edition. Published as Vol. 3 of CWP. Also QH, 1986: 1-645 and QH, 2002: 1-644.

The contents and genesis of the two autobiographical volumes and of the "early autobiography" have been discussed in the *Translator's Introduction* (thereafter referred to as TI) to the *Life of Shabkar*.

Part I, composed in 1935, covers Shabkar's life until the age of fifty-six, and Part II, from the age of fifty-six to seventy. The last section of Part II, written by Kyapdal Longyang (*khyab brdal klong yangs*), details some facts, and describes certain miraculous events, not described in the autobiographies. It also relates the last moments of Shabkar's life.

◆ SH 3: *gsang ba'i rnam thar*. Vol. 2 (kha): 691-762. The esoteric biography. *rje btsun zhabs dkar rdo rje 'chang chen po'i gsang ba'i rtogs brjod mandarava'i phreng ba de kho na nyid snang ba 'phag ma'i zhal lung*. QH, 2002, Vol. 2: 645-700. (Original manuscript in *dbu med*, 21 folios, preserved at TK).

The origin of this esoteric biography is rather unusual. Four years after Shabkar's death in 1855, his close disciple Kunzang Nyendrak (*kun bzang snyan grags*), who possessed the *siddhi* of clairvoyance, visited Yama Tashikhyil. He was there request by Sangye Rinchen (see above) to write the secret biography of Shabkar by means of *pra*, a method of divination using a mirror.

Kunzang Nyendrak gladly complied with this request and, in 1856, committed to writing all that he had seen. The result is a unique secret biography describing the visions and meditative experiences enjoyed by Shabkar throughout his life.

Other Biographies (*rnam thar*)

◆ SH 4: *grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa dpal chen nam mkha' 'jigs med mchog gi rnam par thar pa snying por dril ba bskal bzang thar pa 'khrid pa'i ded dpon*. Vol. 2 (kha): 763-868. A biography of Changlung Namkha Jigme (*spyang lung nam mkha' 'jigs med*, 1769-1833), one of Shabkar's spiritual friends, written at TK. According to oral sources in Rebkong, this biography was written based on notes made by Shabkar's disciple Nyang Tshampa Lobsang Tenpa'i Nyima (*nyang mtshams pa blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma*, 1811-1861).

◆ SH 5: *bka' drin mnyam med rtsa ba'i bla ma bstan 'dzin nyi ma rin po che'i rnam thar las, sku tshe'i stod kyi mdzad pa cung zad tshigs su bcad pa*. Vol. 2 (kha): 869-878. An account in verse of the early life of Tendzin Nyima (*bstan 'dzin nyi ma*) from Gomar (*sgo dmar*), also known as Lobsang Ozer (*blo bzang 'od zer*), an accomplished hermit and one of Shabkar's teachers, whom he met on *mtsho snying* island. Composed on the island, in 1809.

◆ SH 6: *grub dbang padma rang grol rin po che'i sku tshe'i stod kyi rnam par thar pa rin chen 'phreng ba'i smad cha rin chen phreng mdzes*. Vol. 2 (kha): 879-912. The second part of the biography of Drubwang Pema Rangdrol (*grub dbang pad ma rang grol*), supplementing the master's own autobiography (the short title of which is *pad ma rang grol rnam thar rin chen 'phreng ba*. This first part existed until recently in the Rebkong area, but so far has not been located). Written at the hermitage of Kheche Dekyi Nyamga Ling (*khe che bde skyid nyams dga' gling*).

◆ SH 7: *bla ma skal ldan bde bar gshegs pa'i rnam par thar pa las, sku tshe tha ma'i rnam thar yi ge nyung ngu'i lam nas ston pa mi rtag 'chi ba ston pa'i slob dpon*. Vol. 2 (kha): 913-929. A short account of the death of Kalden Rangdrol (*skal ldan rang grol*), one of Shabkar's closest disciples, also known as Lhundrup Rigdzin (*lhun grub rig 'dzin*, 1779-1828), who drowned just after discovering a place where the river Machu (*rma chu*) could be forded, thus saving a caravan of hundreds of people from famine. Written at TK.

VOLUMES 3-5

Collected Songs (*mgur 'bum*)

◆ SH 8: *bya btang tshogs drug rang grol gyis rang dang skal ldan gdul bya la mgrin pa gdams pa'i dang mdzod nas glu dbyangs dga' ston 'gyed pa rnams*. Published in three parts: *stod cha*, Vol. 3 (kha): 1- 760, *bar cha*, Vol. 4 (nga): 1-607, and *smad cha*, Vol. 5 (Ca): 1-402. These are volumes Kha and Ga of the TK edition. The first part (*stod cha*) of the *mgur 'bum* was published earlier as Vol. 4 of CWP: 1-760. Both parts were published in Amdo as QH Vol. 1 (*stod cha*), 1987: 1-846, Vol.2 (*smad cha*), 1988: 1-872, and again in the QH 2002 edition Vol. 3: 1-815 and Vol. 4: 1-738.

Early one morning at Amnye Machen (*a myes rma chen*) (see *NAM*, SH 1, fol. 276), Shabkar had a vision of a king who told him, "It is wonderful that you adhere to the life-style of our holy predecessors, singing songs of the sacred teachings. I name you the *Bard of the Land of Snows*. It is most kind of you to leave thousands of songs as the heritage of Tibet. They will bring immense benefit to faithful disciples."

The collections of songs are also a mine of information both about Shabkar himself and also his disciples. Several smaller collections (*see* SH-MAN 2-7), at the end of this catalogue) were gathered at every sacred place where Shabkar spent a significant amount of time: Lake Kokonor, *Tsa ri*, Mount Kailash, Lapchi etc. Later, many of the songs were incorporated in the two autobiographies (see *TI*), and there were still enough written songs left over to fill two large volumes.

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS, PIECES OF SPIRITUAL ADVICE AND LETTERS

◆ SH 9: *springs yig ka la ping ka'i sgra dbyangs*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 290-294. Spiritual advice sent by Shabkar from TK to his disciples in Central Tibet.

◆ SH 10: *nyams mgur khu byug sngon mo'i skad snyan*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 294-296. A joyful spiritual song, composed in TK.

◆ SH 11: *'dun ma legs pa'i mgur dbyangs gdangs snyan pi wang gling bu*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 296-298. A song in which Shabkar recollects major aspects of his life, written at TK.

◆ SH 12: *dam chos gser 'od dam pa'i rnga sgra*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 298-300. A collection of a dozen major quotations of the Buddha and a few important teachers, gathered at TK by Shabkar as a source of inspiration.

◆ SH 13: *rgyal ba yab sras la phul ba'i zhu shog rab dkar gos bzang*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 300-304. A letter offered to the Dalai Lama, followed by one offered ot the Panchen Lama, beginning with the words *nges 'byung byang sems...*

◆ SH 14: *skyo mgur pi wang rgyud mang*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 304-307. A melancholic spiritual advice, evoking impermanence and the need to dedicate oneself to spiritual practice, sent by Shabkar's to his disciple in central and western Tibet.

◆ SH 15: *man ngag gser gyi thur ma*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 307-311. A short spiritual advice.

◆ SH 16: *zhal gdams dang mgur sna tshogs*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 311-389. Various pieces of advice and spiritual songs.

◆ SH 17: *springs yig kun dga'i dpal ster ngo mtshar dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 403-410. Letter of advice to disciples and patrons in the central provinces, sent from Chusang (*chu bzang*) monastery in Amdo, some time after 1837.

◆ SH 18: *springs yig rnar snyan yid 'bab dri za'i bu mo'i glu dbyangs*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 411-418. Letter of advice to disciples and patrons living in the region of Ngari Korsum (*mnga' ri skor gsum*), sent from Chusang monastery in Amdo.

◆ SH 19: *snying gtam dbyangs can pi wang*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 418-419. Letter of advice sent to hermits of central and western Tibet.

◆ SH 20: *springs yig bde skyid nyi ma rang 'char*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 419-425. Advice in reply to letters from disciples in central and western Tibet, in which Shabkar explains why he could not come again to see them and encouraging them to persevere in their practice. Sent from TK.

◆ SH 21: *dbus gtsang la springs yig nyi ma'i 'od zer*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 425-433. A similar advice, sent from TK when Shabkar was 66 years old.

◆ SH 22: *mnga' ris la springs yig zla ba'i 'od zer*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 433-441. Message sent to disciples in central Tibet. Shabkar tells them that he continues to live in solitude at Drong Lung (*'brong lung*) hermitage, and explains that he is too old to visit the provinces of U and Tsang again. He tells his disciples not to be sad but to pray to the Guru and endeavor in their spiritual practice.

◆ SH 23: *rong mtshams la springs yig nor bu'i 'od zer*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 441-448. Similar message sent from TK.

◆ SH 24: *sems la gang shar yi ger bkod pa*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 448-452. Letter sent to central Tibet from TK, with gifts, blessed substances and books.

◆ SH 25: *lo rgyus gsal ba'i sgron me*. Vol. 5 (Ca): 452-455. Reply to letters from central Tibet.

◆ SH 26: *mi rtag sgyu ma'i chos bshad.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 455-459. Letter enjoining his disciples to remember the impermanent and illusory nature of this world and meditate on the guru's body, speech, and mind. Written at TK.
◆ SH 27 to 33 are letters sent by Shabkar to Central Tibet *(chab shog skor: dbus gtsang phyogs su bskur ba'i zhu yig sna tshogs)* Vol. 5: 459-472. These include:
◆ SH 27: Letter of spiritual advice to Jinpa Norbu (*sbyin pa nor bu*) beginning with the words *Namo guru ji lta ji snyed.*
◆ SH 28: Letter of advice to Lama Gangriwa (*bla ma gangs ri ba*) beginning with the words btsun pa'i ljon shing rtsa ba rab tu brtan...
◆ SH 29: Letter of advice to Lama Yeshe Wangchuk (*bla ma ye shes dbang phyug*) beginning with the words *bla ma mchog gsum mgo yi zhwa bzhin bkur...*
◆ SH 30: Letter offered to the abbot of Rina (*ri sna*) monastery beginning with the words *nges 'byung byang sems yang dag lta ba yi...*
◆ SH 31: Letter sent to Khardo Tulku (*mkhar rdo sprul sku*) beginning with the words *zla med thub bstan dar zhing rgyas pa dang...*
◆ SH 32: Letter sent to the young Chaksam Tulku (*lcags zam sprul sku*) beginning with the words *thub bstan padma'i tshal rnams legs skyong shing.*
◆ SH 33: Letter offered to the son of Chogyal Lha Gyari (*chos rgyal lha rgya ri*) beginning with the words *ris med mdo sngags bstan pa'i nyin byed mchog.*
◆ SH 34: *springs yig pi wang rgyud mang.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 473-484. A letter describing Shabkar's restoration, in 1824, of the stupa of Chung Riwoche (*cung ri po che*), first constructed by Thangtong Gyalpo (*thang stong rgyal po*).
◆ SH 35: *spring yig snyan pa'i ba dan dkar po.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 484-488. Letter sent by Shabkar from TK, encouraging devotees to support the monastic renunciates with alms.
◆ SH 36: *'phrin yig gdung ba kun sel.* Letter of advice. Not found.
◆ SH 37: *spring yig bkra shis dpal 'bar.* Letter of advice. Not found.
◆ SH 38: *bka' shog bkra shis gzhi 'dzin.* Letter. Not found.
◆ SH 39: *bca' yig rin chen them skas.* Rules. Not found
◆ SH 40: *sngags mang gi bca' yig chos kyi sgo 'byed.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 488-521. Recalling the history of the Dzogchen tradition of the Nyingma lineage. Written at TK for the mantrika community of the Rebkong district.
◆ SH 41: *bca' yig chos kyi sgo 'byed.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 521-524. Advice to the mantrika community of Zhowong (*zho bong*).
◆ SH 42: *bca' yig drang srong bden tshig.* Rules of the monastic hermitage of Yama Tashikhyil (*g.ya ma bra shis 'khyil*). Not found.
◆ SH 43: *snying gtam rin chen phreng ba.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 525-527. Advice to the people of Banag Khasum (*rba nag kha gsum*).
◆ SH 44: *zhal gdams*, spiritual advice beginning with the words *skyon gyis ma gos bla mar gsol ba 'debs.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 528.
◆ SH 45: *zhal gdams,* spiritual advice beginning with the words *dpal ldan bla ma'i zhabs.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 528-530. Written at TK.
◆ SH 46: *drin can A ma'i phyi ma'i lam yig.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 531-544. (SH 46 to 48) A guide written by Shabkar after the death of his mother, to lead her on the path of her next life.
◆ SH 47: *A ma dran pa'i mgur.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 544-550. Narration, songs and teachings related to the death of Shabkar's mother, which were later interspersed in the *rnam thar*. Includes a song beginning with *rje bla ma sangs rgyas...*: 547-550.
◆ SH 48: *ma yi drin bsab.* Vol. 5 (Ca): 550-555. Remembering and repaying one's mother's kindness. Written by Shabkar on the occasion of his mother's death.

MAIN TEACHINGS AND SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

The English equivalent of the titles, given in square brackets, are those used in the translation of *The Life of Shabkar*.

THE NINE EMANATED SCRIPTURES (*sprul pa'i glegs bam dgu*)

The expression *sprul pa'i glegs bam* appears in the titles of nine of Shabkar's major works. In NAM (chap. 11, fol. 262b), he explains, "I called these teachings 'emanated' to indicate their authenticity. They are as though emanated from earlier scriptures, just as one butter-lamp is lit from another." This series of *emanated scriptures* succeeds in conveying the flavor and the essential teachings of the various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

VOLUME 6

◆ SH 49: *ngo mtshar sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Marvelous Emanated Scriptures]. Vol. 6 (Cha): 1-283. TK edition, 173 fols. Also manuscript in *dbu med,* 109 fols. CWP, 1985. QH, Vol 5: 1-234. Composed at the monastery of Shephel Ling (*bshad 'phel gling*) in Purang (*spu rang*), during the winter of 1817-18, this text became very popular in central Tibet. Shabkar said of it that "it is based on the teachings and stories found in the discourses of the Buddha and in various writings of the sages of India and Tibet." After an elaborate praise of the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha, it recounts thirty-four former existences of Shakyamuni during which he generated the wish to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings and endured immense hardship simply to receive a few words of teachings.

With the help of didactic stories, the second section stresses the importance of reflecting on impermanence and death and on the law of karma. The third and fourth parts explain how lay people are to live in harmony with the Dharma.

◆ SH 50: *bka' gdams sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of the Kadampas]. Vol. 6 (Cha): 285-740. Part of vol. Ga of TK edition, 233 fols. Also, manuscript in *dbu med* of 171 fols., CWP, 1983. QH, Vol. 6: 219-599. Composed at Mount Kailash around 1815, this work was, on Shabkar's own account, intended to explain the Kadampa "graded path" in simple terms easily accessible to ordinary people. The text is typical of Shabkar's colorful style. Beginning with renunciation and culminating in the six *paramitas,* it abounds in stories and anecdotes illustrating the practices for individuals with limited, medium, and superior faculties. It may be regarded as a lively, expanded version of the *lam rim gsal ba'i sgron me,* which Shabkar composed in 1808.

VOLUME 7

◆ SH 51: *rgyal sras sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of the Bodhisattva]. Volume 7 (Ja): 1-330. TK edition, 181 fols. QH, Vol. 5: 235-509. This volume derives its name from the life and teachings of the great bodhisattva Gyalse Ngulshu Thogme (*rgyal sras dngul chu thogs med,* 1295-1369), an earlier incarnation of Shabkar (see TI p.26). It is a detailed explanation of the celebrated *blo sbyong don bdun ma* according to Ngulchu Thogme's tradition.

Following an exhaustive description of the lineage of the *blo sbyong,* there is a thorough explanation of the "seven-point mind training" (*blo sbyong don bdun ma*), studded with anecdotes recounted in the *sgrung bshad* narrative style. In the section on absolute bodhicitta, the author gives an in depth introduction to the nature of the mind (*sems kyi ngo sprod*) enriched with many quotes. This text was composed at Milarepa's cave Dudul Phuk (*bdud 'dul phug*) in Lapchi (*la phyi*) in 1819, at the request of *skal ldan rang grol* and many others, following an oral teachings that Shabkar gave to a few hundred disciples.

◆ SH 52: *snying rje sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of Compassion]. Vol. 7 (Ja): 331-468. (Part of vol. Cha of TK edition, 61 fols.). QH, Vol. 6: 600-713. This is Shabkar's last major work (together with the second part of his autobiography). Composed at TK around 1846 (see SH 2, QH, 1986, p. 363). It opens with a beautiful hymn in praise of compassion, illustrated with quotations that Shabkar had collected throughout his life. The work continues with two sections in which he again condemns uncompromisingly

the consumption of meat by Buddhist practitioners. For those on the Mahayana path, he says, it is unacceptable to eat meat at the cost of endless suffering for animals. He quotes from the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*, in which the Buddha said, "The eating of meat annihilates the seed of compassion," and extensively from the sixth chapter of the *Lankavatara Sutra*, which is entirely devoted to the condemnation of meat-eating: "If, bereft of compassion and wisdom, you eat meat, you have turned your back on liberation. [..]. Meat is the food of ferocious beasts."

It is here and in the *legs bshad bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun* (SH 65) that Shabkar delivers the most sweeping indictment of meat-eating to be found in Tibetan literature. It was particularly relevant at a time when the prediction the Buddha made in the *Lankavatara Sutra* had already become a reality: "In the future, meat-eaters, speaking out of ignorance, will say that the Buddha permitted the eating of meat, and that he taught that there was no sin in doing so."

◆ SH 53: *ya mtshan sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Amazing Emanated Scriptures]. Vol. 7 (Ja): 469-642. TK edition in 76 fols. Also manuscript in *dbu can*, 88 fols. Darjeeling: Lama Dawa and Chopal Lama, 1984. QH, Vol. 5: 510-653. Composed at Khardo Samten Ling (*mkhar do bsam gtan gling*), near Lhasa, in 1825, this treatise encourages the practitioner to consider the problems created by craving for the five pleasures of the senses, particularly the attachment to food, clothing, and sex. It tells of the need to rid oneself of the preoccupations of this life and to endeavor in spiritual practice in solitude; and it describes the joy that such renunciation brings.

VOLUME 8

◆ SH 54: *rmad byung sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Wondrous Emanated Scriptures]. Vol. 8 (Nya): 1-256. Part of vol. Cha of TK edition, 112 fols. Also, manuscript in *dbu can*, 119 fols., Darjeeling: Lama Dawa and Chopal Lama, 1984. QH, Vol. 7: 1-214. At the request of the incarnation of Tsodu Khen Rinpoche (*tsho 'du'i mkhan rin po che*) (the latter was Shabkar's own father) and others, this text was composed at TK after Shabkar had returned from central Tibet. It opens with a powerful admonition against eating meat, one of the author's favorite topics, quoting at length from several Mahayana sutras, especially the *Lankavatara Sutra* (often said to be "the quintessence of the Buddha's words"), in which the Buddha says: "Those who practice loving-kindness should consider all sentient beings as their own children; therefore, they must give up eating meat." Contrary to common belief, not only the sutras but also the tantras condemn meat-eating. The *thugs rje chen po 'khor ba dong sprug gyi rgyud*, for instance, says that the result of eating meat is rebirth in the hell-realm for an entire kalpa. Shabkar cites the example of many saints who denounced meat-eating, including Mila Repa (*mi la ras pa*) who said: "Having slaughtered innocent animals, one eats their flesh and get drunk. All the conditions come together for rebirth in the hell realms."

The second section of the text depicts the negative effects of drinking. It quotes the Buddha who said: "whoever drinks a drop of alcohol is not my disciple." The third section discusses sex, presenting it as a compulsive craving that leads to all kinds of negative conduct. The fourth section depicts the dreadful karmic consequences of killing any living being.

◆ SH 55: *'jam dbyangs sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of Manjushri]. Vol. 8 (Nya): 257-519. Part of Vol. Nga of TK edition, 144 fols. Also manuscript in *dbu can*, 109 fols., published as Vol. 5 of *CWP*, 1984. QH, Vol. 6: 1-218. Composed near Milarepa's Miracle Cave (*rdzu 'phrul phug*) at Mount Kailash around 1815, this compendium of spiritual instructions is written in the form of questions and answers between Shabkar and his disciples. It presents the essence of the *lam rim*, *blo sbyong*, *mahamudra*, *rdzogs chen*, and *doha* traditions. In twenty-two pieces of advice, the author elucidates the essentials of spiritual practice: the need to renounce the world, to rely on a spiritual master, and to unite meditation on emptiness with compassion. It explains how to meditate, how to apply the insights thus gained in daily life, and how to mingle one's mind with the guru's mind, liberating thoughts as they arise. Shabkar's style is crisp and effective, as if he had intended to define each step of the contemplative life in the most brief, yet complete and inspiring way for practitioners.

VOLUME 9

◆ SH 56: *dag snang sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of Pure Vision]. Vol 9 (Ta): 1-306. Part of vol. Tha of TK xylograph, 135 fols. Published as vol. 5 of CWP, 1984. QH, Vol. 8: 427-669. Composed at Tashikhyil, this text stands somewhat apart from Shabkar's other works. In many of his writings, he emphasizes the safe approach of the Mind Training (*blo sbyong*), entailing renunciation from worldly pleasures, for this approach is suited to most practitioners. In this text, however, Shabkar describes the methods that utilize sense-pleasures and bliss as catalysts for spiritual progress. He clearly delineates the conditions that must be fulfilled by the exceptional person able to implement such practices in an appropriate manner.

Shabkar composed this text in response to a request for a teaching that would inspire pure vision toward the authentic practitioners of the Vajrayana. In the colophon, he mentions that he first conceived the wish to write such a text when, in the course of his travels, he saw that many people thoughtlessly criticized Vajrayana practitioners for not renouncing meat, alcohol, and sex. In his introduction he states: "Although many individuals in this age appear to be merely indulging their worldly desires, one does not have the capacity to judge them, so it is best to train oneself in the practice of in pure vision."

Drawing on many texts, he defends the Nyingma school against its detractors, warning that it is a serious fault to disparage an authentic tradition out of prejudice and ignorance. He also demonstrates how all views and traditions are non-contradictory and lead to the same goal. After giving the reasons why the Vajrayana must be kept secret, he concludes, "one must cultivate pure perception of the actions of Bodhisattvas and great *siddhas*. On the other hand, immature disciples should not thoughtlessly try to imitate them." The *dag snang sprul pa'i glegs bam* ends with two small texts on *thabs lam*.

◆ SH 57: *rdzogs rim 'od gsal mngon du byed pa'i thabs bde ba chen po bskyed tshul 'dod yon lha mo'i dga' ston*. Vol 9 (Ta): 291-295, QH, Vol. 8: 670-673.

◆ SH 58: *yes shes kyi phyag rgya ma la brten nas bde stong gi ye shes bskyed tshul dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*: Vol 9 (Ta): 296-306, QH, Vol. 8: 674-683. Although these two last sections were carved at TK and have been included in the present edition, as well as in QH, they are considered to be sealed with secrecy *(bka' rgya ma)*.

◆ SH 59: *bstan 'gro yongs la phan pa'i O rgyan sprul pa'i glegs bam* [The Emanated Scriptures of Orgyen]. Vol 9 (Ta): 307-579. Vol Om of TK xylograph in 106 fols. Also published at Dolanji: Tsering Wangyal, 1975. QH, Vol. 7: 215-441. QH, Vol. 7: 215-440. Once, in his old age, Shabkar experienced a vision of Guru Padmasambhava. In the course of the vision he said to Guru Rinpoche, "I have prayed to you all my life, yet until now I have never been blessed by a vision of you." "Don't you remember," Guru Rinpoche replied, "The vision you had on the Island of Tsonying? That was me." He thus indicated that it was he who had appeared to him in the form of Tsongkhapa. Following this vision, and at the request of the Tulku of Khenpo Shiwa Tso (*mkhan po zhi ba mtsho*) and others, Shabkar wrote this treatise at TK, around 1845 (see SH 2, QH, 1986, p.349).

The first section describes how our universe – with its countless realms, Buddhas, and sentient beings – appeared within the immutable expanse of primordial emptiness. The author then explains how various pure and impure perceptions, *samsara* and *nirvana*, came about through the process of dependent arising. In infinite Buddhafields and in every atom of the universe, infinite Buddhas display infinite forms to meet the aspirations and capacities of beings, and to free them from ignorance and suffering. Shabkar then goes on to show how, thanks to pure perception; the entire phenomenal world can be regarded as the manifestation of Guru Padmasambhava.

The purpose of the second section is to demonstrate the authenticity of the tantras and *gter ma* of the Nyingma tradition. Shabkar points out that *gter ma* are found in all lineages of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, and not only in the Nyingma lineage. He then quotes masters from various schools who emphasize that the *gter ma* tradition is particularly appropriate for our times.

Citing the second Dalai Lama and masters from all schools, the third section describes how Atisha and Tsongkhapa were both emanations of Padmasambhava. Shabkar lays special emphasis on the relationship

between the Nyingma master Lhodrak Drupchen Lekyi Dorje (*lho brag grub chen las kyi rdo rje*, 1326-1401) and Je Tsongkhapa.[4] The fourth section is a final encouragement to extricate oneself from the bonds of *samsara* and speedily to attain Buddhahood.

THE THREE DHARMA DISCOURSES (*chos bshad gsum*)

VOLUME 10

◆ SH 60: *chos bshad gzhan phan nyi ma* [The Beneficial Sun]. Vol. 10 (Tha): 1-308, composed in 1811, at Cholung (*chos lung*) near Lhasa. Part of volume Ja of TK edition, 122 fols. Also manuscript in *dbu med*, 166 fols, CWP, 1983. QH, Vol. 6: 441-696. "Scholars," Shabkar declares, "can delight the learned with a stream of profound and elegant teachings, but these are not much help to ordinary, uneducated people. The latter sometimes come away from long teaching-sessions with nothing to keep in mind and nothing to pass on to others. They can only say, 'The master taught a lot, but we haven't a clue of what he was talking about. We would like to practice, but we don't know where to start.'"

It was with such people mind that Shabkar composed this text. "My disciples," he said, "persistently requested these teachings, but I had no books from which to draw stories and quotations. So like a generous person turning his bag inside out and tipping out its contents onto a cloth spread upon the ground, I wrote down everything that came into my mind without holding anything back – and called it *The Beneficial Sun.*"

The structure of this text is typical of several of Shabkar's other writings that focus on Mahayana training. Beginning with the basic karmic law of cause and effect, he explains how negative thoughts and actions result in suffering and positive ones bring happiness. He also explains the value of human existence. To misuse or squander this life is like filling a jewelled golden vase with filth. Through vividly depicting the sufferings of animals, he stresses the evils of hunting and fishing, and of butchering animals for their meat. Having emphasized the essential role of loving-kindness, compassion, and Bodhicitta as the very essence of the Mahayana path, Shabkar concludes by explaining the importance of dedicating the merits of virtuous actions to the benefit of others.

◆ SH 61: *chos bshad gzhan phan zla ba* [The Beneficial Moon] composed at Tsari in 1812. Vol 10 (Tha): 309-651. TK edition, 171 fols. Also manuscript in *dbu chen* of 178 fols. kept in Kyermi, Humla, Nepal. NGMPP, reel no. E 2723/11 to 2724/1. QH, Vol. 8: 1-284. Shabkar wrote the *chos bshad gzhan phan zla ba* at Tsari in 1812, for the benefit of disciples living in solitary retreat in the mountains. The text is illustrated with wonderful quotations from the saints of the four main lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, chiefly belonging to the Kagyu school. Of all Shabkar's writings, this text gives the most powerful incentive to give up the ordinary affairs of this world. It presents non-attachment and renunciation as the keys to spiritual progress and happiness. If no inner transformation results from one's study, meditation and action, it is because of one's strong desire for the pleasures of this life.

Shabkar exhorts his disciples to go to secluded mountain retreats and not to postpone their spiritual practice. A novice who practices in busy places stacks all the odds against success on the spiritual path. By contrast, solitude enables even vulnerable beginners to progress without hindrance. Although the welfare of beings should be their main motivation, immature practitioners should not be too quick to help or teach others, before they have developed a stable realization.

VOLUME 11

◆ SH 62: *chos bshad gzhan phan nor bu* [The Beneficial Jewel] Vol. 11 (Da): 1-631. TK edition, 247 fols. QH, Vol. 9: 1-529. At the request of Kunzang Rangdrol, one of his close disciples, Shabkar wrote this text

4. On the relation between *lho brag grub chen* and *tsong kha pa*, see Ehrhard, Franz-Karl "The 'Vision' of rDzogs-chen: A text and its histories." In *Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*. Naritasan: 1989, as well as Appendix 5 of *The Life of Shabkar* and *The Collected Works (gsung 'bum) of lho brag grub chen nam mkha' rgyal mtshan*. Thimphu: Kunzang Topgyel, 1985.

in a small hermitage near the Varahi Temple at Tsari in 1812. Its purpose is to enhance pure perception toward the various aspects and levels of the Buddha's teachings and to those who hold these teachings. Shabkar explains here at great length how all these philosophical views and spiritual practices are in truth non-contradictory. He also advice cultivating pure vision toward non-buddhist traditions. With an abundance of reasoning, quotes and stories he shows how the various misconceptions held by uneducated people regarding each of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism are unfounded.

THE THREE EXCELLENT DISCOURSES (*legs bshad gsum*)

VOLUME 12

◆ SH 63: *legs bshad kun bzang mchod sprin* [The Cloud Like Offering of Samantabhadra]. Vol. 12 (Na): 1-314 composed at Tsari in 1812. TK edition, 134 fols. QH, Vol. 10: 103-364. This four-part text was composed at Tsari for Shabkar's close disciple Kalden Rangdrol (*skal ldan rang grol*, 1779-1828) and others, who requested a text that would inspire faith, respect, and pure perception towards the various levels of the Buddhist teachings and those who practice them. Shabkar explains the need for diversity in the Buddha's teachings, tailored as they are to the varying capacity of beings. Since they are all aids in the progress towards enlightenment, and antidotes to suffering, the teachings are non-contradictory. Shabkar quotes at length the conversations of Drom Tönpa (*'brom ston pa rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas*, 1004-1064) with his teacher Atisha (*jo bo rje a ti sha*, 982-1054) about the relationships between the various *yanas* and the need to cultivate a pure perception of all Buddhist schools.

The essence of all the teachings is to master one's mind and dispel ego clinging (*bdag 'dzin*); one therefore needs to develop a correct view (*lta ba*). In this context, Shabkar offers an in-depth teaching on the nature of the mind and a thorough investigation of the notion of ego. He concludes by stressing the essential need to cultivate *bodhicitta* and pure vision (*dag snang*) towards all beings and phenomena.

◆ SH 64: *legs bshad nyi ma rang shar* [The Self-Arising Sun] Vol. 12 (Na): 315-574. Part of vol Tha of TK xylograph, 116 fols. QH, Vol. 10: 365-583. Shabkar examines the controversy surrounding the so-called *hwa shan* view. He describes the protagonists of the debate that took place at Samye between the proponents of the gradual approach to enlightenment (*rim skyes pa*), represented by Shantarakshita's disciple Vikramashila, and the adepts of "sudden" realization (*cig char ba*), advocated by the Chinese monk *Hwa shan* Mahayana. He reminds us of the views of Sakya Pandita and Tsongkhapa, who accused the practitioners of *mahamudra* and *rdzogs chen* of falling into the *hwa shan* view. Shabkar also presents the refutations of these opinions by several Nyingma and Kagyu scholars, especially Kunkhyen Pema Karpo (*kun mkhyen padma dkar po*, 1527-1592).

With characteristic diplomacy, Shabkar begins by paying homage to all the protagonists in the controversy. He also points out that there were numerous philosophical schools among Chinese Buddhists, each of them represented by learned and accomplished masters. The meditation practice that aims to bar all conceptual thoughts from the mind is only one among the three main *hwa shan* views.

In defence of the Nyingma tradition, Shabkar then dismisses Thuken Chökyi Nyima's (*thu'u bkvan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma*, 1737-1802) astonishing claim that King Lang Darma (*glang dar ma*), who almost wiped out Buddhism in Tibet, was an emanation of Chenrezi, the Buddha of compassion, because he cleared away "impure doctrines" (meaning the Nyingma tradition). Shabkar then gives a detailed explanation of the difference between the state of having no thoughts and the state of going beyond thoughts. And he shows the difference between the Dzogchen teachings, which he describes as the apex of the Vajrayana, and the *hwa shan* views which are based on eighty specific sutras.

◆ SH 65: *legs shad bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun* [The Stream of Ambrosia]. Vol. 12 (Na): 575-614. QH, Vol. 9: 549-580. This text is entirely devoted to an explanation of the negativity involved in the consumption of meat. It was composed in Drong Lung (*'brong lung*), in Amdo. It has been translated into English by the Padmakara Translation Group, and published, with an introduction in *Food for Heroes*, Boston, Shambhala, 2003.

VOLUME 13

THE THREE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS (*gdams ngag gsum*)

◆ SH 66: *mi shes mun pa mthug po sel ba'i lam rim gsal ba'i sgron me* [The Torch That Illuminates the Graded Path]. Vol. 13 (Pa): 1-169. TK xylograph in 61 fols. Also CWP, 1983. QH, Vol. 8: 285-426.

This short text, written at Tsonying Island, shows that the equivalence between dependent origination (*rten 'byung*) and emptiness is the ultimate view of the Madhyamaka Prasangika. This understanding, however, does not lead us to neglect the laws of karma, but rather to the realization that emptiness manifests as the law of cause and effect.

In 1808, on Tsonying Island, Shabkar experienced a magnificent dream (*see* NAM chap. 6, fol. 117) in which he climbed a long crystal staircase to the top of a jewel mountain, upon which he met a lama of resplendent dignity. "One never tired of looking at him; the mere sight of his face put an end to the mind' delusion." The lama in question was Guru Padmasambhava appearing in the form of Tsongkhapa. He was teaching the *lam rim bsdus don* to a retinue of disciples. At the end of the teaching, he gave the book to Shabkar. Inspired by the account of this dream, some disciples requested Shabkar to compose a teaching in verse on the graded path. He therefore composed the *lam rim gsal ba'i sgron me*, intending thereby to present an intermediate version of the *lam rim* teachings of Je Tsongkhapa (*rje tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa*, 1357-1419), shorter than the *lam rim chen mo*, yet more detailed than the *lam rim bsdus don*. Composed in verses of fifteen syllables each, this treatise is perhaps the most formal of Shabkar's works.

◆ SH 67: *rang gzhan thams cad 'tshengs pa'i gdams ngag gser gyi ri bo.* [The Mountain of Gold]. Vol. 13 (Pa): 171-292. TK xylograph in 47 fols., CPW, 1983. QH, Vol. 10: 1-102. This instruction, composed at TK around 1845, refers to various activities related to the preparation for spiritual practice. It emphasizes the benefit of cleaning temples, of displaying sacred images, and of arranging offerings properly and beautifully. These are the various methods that allow one to perfect the accumulation of wisdom and merit. The text then describes the virtuous practices to be performed between meditation sessions and, finally, the way in which merit is to be dedicated with prayers of aspiration. It ends with three additional texts:

◆ SH 68: *mchod pa 'bul ba'i skabs su ji ltar bslab pa'i rim pa.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 275-287. QH, Vol. 10: 86-96. The benefits of making mandala and other offerings to the Buddha and Bodhisattvas dwelling in countless Buddhafields.

◆ SH 69: *mchod pa'i smon lam.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 287-9. QH, Vol. 10: 97-98. Prayer to dedicate the merit of making offerings.

◆ SH 70: *mchod pa'i smon lam zhing khams sgo 'byed.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 289-292. QH, Vol. 10: 99-102. Prayer to dedicate the merit of performing offerings, and pray for rebirth in a Buddhafield.

◆ SH 71: *legs bshad gser gyi thur ma* [The Golden Scalpel – do you mean scalpel]. Vol. 13 (Pa): 293-317. TK xylograph, 12 fols. Xylograph print from *lha sa*, carved in 1842 or 1902, 27 fols. QH, Vol. 9: 529-548. This is one of Shabkar's most famous short Dzogchen instructions, which helps one to recognize the fundamental nature of the mind. Composed at TK.

THE THREE SONGS ON THE VIEW (*lta ba'i mgur gsum*)

◆ SH 72: *'od gsal rdzogs pa chen po'i khregs chod lta ba'i glu dbyangs sa lam ma lus myur du bgrod pa'i rtsal ldan mkha' lding gshog rlabs* [The Flight of the Garuda]. Vol. 13 (Pa): 319-384. QH: Vol. 9: 549-580. TK xylograph in 61 fols. Together with:

◆ SH 73: *'od gsal rdzogs pa chen po'i lhun grub thod rgal gyi glu dbyangs ting 'dzin sgo 'phar brgya phrag cig char 'byed pa'i lde'u mig*, Vol. 13 (Pa): 385-449. QH: Vol. 9: 581-635.

◆ SH 74: *thod rgal gyi gnad kyi zhal shes mgur dbyangs bdud rtsi'i bum bzang* (fols. 55-61). Vol. 13 (Pa): 451-470. QH,: 636-701. Part of Vol. Ta of TK edition. Composed at *mtsho snying* Island around 1807. Wood blocks have also been carved at Khampagar, Tashijong near Kangra, in India (75 fols).

These three form a trilogy and are usually published together. SH 72 has been translated twice into English as *The Flight of the Garuda*, by Erik Schmidt, Pema Kunzang, Kathmandu, Rangjung Yeshe, 1984; and by Keith Dowman, Boston, Wisdom, 1993. There is also a partial translation in German with an analysis of the text

and its background by Franz-Karl Ehrhard, *Flugelschlage des Garuda. Literar-und ideengeschichtliche Bermerkungen zu einer Liedersammlung des rDzogs-chen*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990.

Composed around 1807, when he was twenty-six years old, this is perhaps Shabkar's most famous work. In twenty-three short songs addressed to his disciples, he introduces, with striking beauty and clarity, the view, meditation and practice of the *khregs chod* section of Dzogchen practice, which leads directly to realization of the ultimate nature of the mind.

The second part (SH 73), in eighteen songs, presents the fundamentals of *thod rgal*, the ultimate practice of Dzogchen. The third part (SH74), in three songs, elucidates actual instructions for that visionary practice, based on oral tradition. Because of their highly esoteric nature these two last parts were not included in the English translations.

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS (*gsung sna tshogs*)

◆ SH 75: *sems khrid yid bzhin nor bu.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 471-479. Teaching and meditation on the nature of the mind.

◆ SH 76: *sems khrid snying gi nor bu.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 479-482. An instruction encouraging the reader to watch the nature of the mind.

◆ SH 77: *sems kyi ngo sprod go sla 'khyer bde.* Introduction to the nature of mind. Not found.

◆ SH 78: *gdams pa gcig shes kun grol.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 482-486. How to meditate on the nature of the mind and deal with discursive thoughts. Written at the Kuntuzangpo forest hermitage.

◆ SH 79: *rdzogs chen kun gyi yang bcud nyams len lam khyer gdams pa.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 486-489. How to maintain the practice of *rdzogs chen* in all circumstances.

◆ SH 80: *rdzogs pa chen po'i phan yon.* Benefits of the Great Perfection. Not found.

◆ SH 81: *tshig gsum gnad rdegs kyi 'grel ba.* Mentioned in *dpal rgyal mkhar* article (see note 3), but not found and unknown to present scholars.

◆ SH 82: *zab mo dbu ma'i lta ba ngo mtshar rmad byung.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 491-507. Composed at Yama Tashikhyil. Shabkar this text explains how emptiness and dependent origination are two ways of speaking of the same thing. It is because phenomena are devoid of real existence that they can arise uninterruptedly according to the ineluctable laws of cause and effect.

◆ SH 83: *zab mo lta ba'i gdams pa.* Instruction on the profound view. Not found.

◆ SH 84: *rgyal ba blo bzang dgyes pa'i glu dbyangs.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 509-531. A collection of verses extracted from the beginning and end of each chapter of the *'jam dpal zhal lung* written by the fifth Dalai Lama (an epitome of the *lam rim chen mo* of Je Tsongkhapa. Written down by Shabkar at Zalung (*zwa lung*) in central Tibet.

◆ SH 85: *chos nyan tshul.* Advice on how to listen to the teachings. Not found.

◆ SH 86: *blo sbyong 'dod 'byung nor bu.* Manuscript in *dbu med*, 13 fols. Instructions on Mind Training. Not found.

◆ SH 87: *bsam gtan chos drug.* On the six yogas. Not found.

◆ SH 88: *sprul bsgyur ngo mtshar sgyu ma'i ltad mo'i dga' ston.* On the practice of meditative transformations (*sprul bsgyur*). Not found.

◆ SH 89: *dad pa'i A long 'dren pa'i mdo rgyud lung gi lcags kyu.* Not found.

◆ SH 90: *lung bstan dag snang chos kyi sgo 'byed.* Predictions. Not found.

◆ SH 91: *gsang sngags snga 'gyur la rtsod pa spongs ba sgol ngan dngos po 'joms pa'i rtsod lan rdo rje pha lam.* Refutation of critics against the *rnying ma* tradition. Not found.

◆ SH 92: *rdor sems sgom bzlas byin rlabs bla ma'i rnal 'byor chos bshad dang bcas pa.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 533-550. Instructions for the purification practice based on Vajrasattva, and for the Guru Yoga.

◆ SH 93: *bla ma'i rnal 'byor bsgoms pa'i phan yon.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 551-567. A collection of citations extolling the benefits of the Guru Yoga practice. Written at Mt. Kailash.

◆ SH 94: *bkra shis 'khyil ba'i gnas bstod kun dga'i dpal ster.* Manuscript in *dbu can*, 4 fols. Praise to the sacred place, Yama Tashikhyil. Not found.

◆ SH 95: *mchod rten chen po bya rung kha shor nyams gso gnang ba'i dkar chag thar lam dkar po* [The White Path of Liberation]. A description of the offering of a layer of gold to the Great Stupa of Bodhnath, Kathmandu, Nepal in 1821. Quoted in NAM chap. 13, fol 373. Not found.

◆ SH 96: *gcun ri bo che'i bkra shi sgo mang mchod rten chen po'i nyams gso gnang ba'i dkar chag gsal ba'i me long.* [The Bright Mirror Record]. The list and description of the restoration work of the *bkra shis sgo mang* stupa at Chung Riwoche, in Tö, composed in 1824 (see NAM chap. 14, fol. 397). Not found.
◆ SH 97: *rten bzhengs byas pa'i phan yon.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 569. The benefit or erecting sacred objects.
◆ SH 98: *srog shing 'bri tshul mdor bsdus.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 569-570. Mantras and prayers to be written upon the "life-tree" inserted in statues and stupas.
◆ SH 99: *rten bshad kun 'dus nor bu.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 570-574. A list of relics of all kinds used by Shabkar to prepare pills to be placed inside statues and other sacred objects.
◆ SH 100: *dug don lung dang rig pa'i mda' mo.* Vol. 13 (Pa): 575-592. Xylograph print in 12 fols., also NGMPP, reel no. L 26318. This short text explains the harmful effects of smoking tobacco. Tibetan Buddhism in general, and the Nyingma school in particular, is one of the only religious traditions that considers the smoking of tobacco to be a major source of obstacles on the spiritual practice, written at Drakkar Trel Dzong (*brag dkar sprel rdzong*) in 1809 or 1810. Scholars have pointed out that the original manuscript used to prepare this text seems to have been flawed and we hope, eventually, to locate a more correct version.
◆ SH 101: *grangs 'dren me tog phreng ba blo gsal gzhon nu'i mgul rgyan.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 593-685. A collection of enumerations of Buddhist concepts and categories.
◆ SH 102: *lung 'dren rin chen gter mdzod* [A Jewel Treasury of Quotes], manuscript in *dbu med* kept at *TK*, 133 fols (missing fols. 124 to 132). This manuscript, an extensive collection of quotes from the sutras, tantras and writings of past masters, which Shabkar collected throughout his life has been recently lost in *a mdo.*

VOLUME 14

LITURGICAL PIECES (*'don cha sna tshogs*)

◆ SH 103: *ston pa thugs rje can gyi mdzad pa bcu gnyis dang mthun pa'i rnam thar gsol 'debs nor bu'i phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 1-5. Prayer to Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, recalling his Twelve Deeds.
◆ SH 104: *ston pa'i yon tan rjes su dran tshul chos kyi sgo 'byed.* (9 fols). Praise to the Buddha's qualities. Not found.
◆ SH 105: *bod kyi rgyal po pandita grub chen rag rim tsa zhig mgo smos nas bod du sngon byon dam pa rnams la gsol 'debs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 7-18. A devotional prayer to the great religious kings of Tibet and the accomplished masters of the various spiritual lineages.
◆ SH 106: *bla ma'i gsol 'debs byin rlabs gter mdzod.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 19-24. A poetic prayer to the guru, written at Tsonying island.
◆ SH 107: *bla ma'i mtshan don dang 'brel ba'i gsol 'debs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 25-26. Devotional prayer invoking the names of various teachers of Shabkar's lineage.
◆ SH 108: *grub ba'i dbang phyug dpal chen nam mkha' 'jigs med rin po che'i skyes phreng gsol 'debs rin chen gser gyi phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 27-31. A prayer to the previous and future incarnations of Changlung Namkha Jigme (*spyang lung nam mkha' 'jigs med* – 1769-1833), who had close spiritual links with Shabkar (see his biography in SH 4). Written at TK.
◆ SH 109: *zhabs dkar ba'i skye rabs nyung 'dus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 33-34. A short prayer to Shabkar's past and future incarnations.
◆ SH 110: *bla ma'i rnam thar gsol 'debs dad pa'i sgo 'byed.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 35-40. A devotional prayer evoking Shabkar's life. Written at TK.
◆ SH 111: *bla ma'i rnam thar gsol 'debs snying rje'i sgo 'byed.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 41-46. A devotional prayer focused on Shabkar's compassionate deeds, such as saving the lives of animals, appealing to hunters to stop killing animals and to give up eating meat etc.
◆ SH 112: *bla ma'i gsol 'debs byin rlabs myur 'jug.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 47-49. A devotional prayer to Shabkar, written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 113: *bla ma rgyang 'bod.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 51. A prayer calling the Guru from afar.

◆ SH 114: *na mo gu ru, dal 'byor rnyed dka' 'chi ba myur du 'ong (sngon 'gro nyung bsdus).* Vol. 14 (Pha): 53-54. A concise text for performing the "preliminary practices" (*sngon 'gro nyung 'dus*).
◆ SH 115: A concise meditation on the various steps of spiritual practice, from *sngon 'gro* to *rdzogs rim*, beginning with the words *na mo gu ru manjugosha ya, chos sku kun bzang longs sku rdo rje 'chang.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 55-56.
[Together, the following texts, SH 116-119, written at Mt. Kailash, form a *sngon 'gro* practice. The guru yoga is sometime found on its own].
◆ SH 116: *skyabs sems gsol 'debs dad pa'i 'jug ngogs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 57. Refuge and Bodhicitta.
◆ SH 117: *rdor sems bsgom bzlas sdig sgrib 'khru ba'i chu rgyun.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 57. Meditation and recitation on Vajrasattva
◆ SH 118: *mandal zhing khams sgo 'byed.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 58. Mandala offering.
◆ SH 119: *sgyu lus 'od skur grol ba'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor* Vol. 14 (Pha): 59-60. Guru Yoga.
◆ SH 120: A short guru yoga (*bla ma'i rnal 'byor*) focused upon the master as embodying the Three Roots, beginning with the words *gar bzhugs zhing nas bla ma tshur byon.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 61-62.
◆ SH 121: *gsol 'debs byin rlabs myur 'jug ma dang bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 63-76. A guru yoga focused on Shabkar. It incorporates the prayer SH 112, written earlier. Composed at Drong Lung (*'brong lung*) in Amdo.
◆ SH 122: *'jam dbyangs dkar po la brten pa'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Guru yoga focused on White Manjushri. Not found
◆ SH 123: *rje btsun 'jam dbyangs dmar ser la bsten pa'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Guru yoga focused on the Red-Orange Manjushri. Vol. 14 (Pha): 77-82.
◆ SH 124: *rdo rje rnal 'byor ma la brten pa'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Guru yoga focused on Vajra Yogini. Not found
◆ SH 125: *O rgyan bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 83-89. A Guru yoga focused on Guru Padmasambhava.
◆ SH 126: Beginning with the words *mdun gyi nam mkhar 'ja' 'od gur khang klong*, a guru yoga focused on the trikaya (Shakyamuni, Vajradhara and Samantabhadra), with Guru Padmasambhava and Je Tsongkhapa. Written at Tsonying Island. Vol. 14 (Pha): 91-94.
◆ SH 127: *rje btsun mi la la bsten pa'i byin rlabs myur 'jug bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 95-100. Guru yoga focused on Milarepa.
◆ SH 128: *myur lam bla ma'i rnal 'byor.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 101-107. A guru yoga applicable to all teachers, composed at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 129: *bla ma'i rnal 'byor dngos grub kun rtsol.* Guru Yoga, 4 fols. Not found.
◆ SH 130: *byang sgra mi snyan gyi tshe sgrub kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 109-111. Devotional prayer to the lineage masters of the "Long-life Practice of Uttarakuru".
◆ SH 131: *byang sgra mi snyan gyi tshe sgrub kyi rgyun khyer 'chi med tshe yi yang snying.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 113-123. Daily recitation for the "Long-life Practice of Uttarakuru". Written at Chusang (*chu bzang*) in Amdo.
◆ SH 132: *byang sgra mi snyan gyi tshe sgrub mdor bsdus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 125-126. Short sadhana of the "Long-life Practice of Uttarakuru"
◆ SH 133: *bkra shis 'chi med dpal ster.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 127-128. Prayer for attracting good fortune, to conclude a long-life sadhana. Written at *'brong lung* in *a mdo.*
◆ SH 134: *spyan ras gzigs kyi bsgom bzlas zhal mthong gsung thos ma bzhugs so.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 129-130. Sadhana practice based on a vision of Avalokiteshvara. Written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 135: *spyan ras gzigs kyi bsgom bzlas phan bde'i 'byung gnas.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 131-132. Meditation and recitation on Avalokiteshvara.
◆ SH 136: *smyung gnas cho ga bde gshegs lam bzang.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 133-168. Fasting practice based on the eleven-faced Avalokiteshvara. Written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 137: *smyung gnas cho ga thar pa'i them skas.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 169-178. Concise fasting practice. Written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 138: *rdor sems sgom bzlas sdig bsgrib kun byang.* Meditation and recitation on Vajrasattva. Not found.

◆ SH 139: *rdo rje sems dpa'i khrus kyi cho ga bdud rtsi'i bum bzang.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 179-186. Cleansing ritual based on Vajrasattva. (From a flawed manuscript, a proper edition should be searched for.)
◆ SH 140: *gcod dmigs bdag 'dzin gcod pa'i stwa re.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 187-188. Visualization for the *bcod* practice. Written at Tsari.
◆ SH 141: *zab lam gcod kyi dmigs rim.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 189-194. Visualization for the *bcod* practice. Written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 142: *zab lam gcod kyi ngag 'don bdag 'dzin gcod kyi stwa re.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 195-202. NGMPP, reel no. L 309/5. Visualization for the *bcod* practice.
◆ SH 143: *gcod dmigs bdag 'dzin rtsad gcod.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 203-208. A liturgical text for the practice of *gcod.*
◆ SH 144: *'pho ba spyi gtsug 'ja' gur ma.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 209-210. Short practice of transference to Amitabha's Buddhafield.
◆ SH 145: *tshogs mchod 'dod dgu'i char 'bebs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 211-217. A liturgical text for offering a *ganachakra* to the deities of the three roots. Written at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 146: *tshogs mchod kun bzang mchod sprin.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 217-227. An expanded liturgical text for offering a *ganachakra* to the deities of the three roots. Written at *'byams pa gling.*
◆ SH 147: *rab gnas bsdus pa.* Manuscript in *dbu can*, 2 fols, preserved at Serang Gonpa, Nepal. NGMPP, reel no. L 342/3. Ritual for the consecration of sacred objects. Could not be included in this edition.
◆ SH 148: *bsang mchod mdor bsdus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 229-230. Short ritual for offering fragrant smoke.
◆ SH 149: *mnol bsangs mdor bsdus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 231-232. Short purifying offering of fragrant smoke.
◆ SH 150: *g.yang 'gug dbul ba kun sel.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 233-237. Invocation for attracting prosperity and well-being. Written at TK.
◆ SH 151: *dzam nag gi mngon rtogs 'dod dgu'i char 'bebs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 239-244. Visualization and recitation focused on black Jambhala for increasing abundance.
◆ SH 152: Short invocation to Jambhala beginning with the words *bla ma yid bzhin nor bu.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 245.
◆ SH 153: *gtor bsngo mdor bsdus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 247-252. Short *gtor ma* offering.
◆ SH 154: *gtor ma brgya rtsa bsdus pa, chu sbyin, klu gtor mdor bsdus, gsur bsngo nyung bsdus.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 253-260. Texts for the "hundred *gtor ma* offering", water *gtor ma* offering, offering to the Nagas, and burnt offering. Written at Lapchi.
◆ SH 155: *ja mchod 'dod dgu'i char 'bebs.* Tea offering. Not found.
◆ SH 156: *mkha' 'gro mched lnga'i gser skyems dngos grub char 'bebs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 261-262. Libation-offering to the "five sisters of longevity," *tshe ring mched lnga.*
◆ SH 157: *shar thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang chos grags rgya mtsho'i yang sprul myur 'byon.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 263-264. Supplication for the swift rebirth of the abbot of Rongpo Gonchen (*rong po dgon chen*) in Rebkong.
◆ SH 158: Supplication for the swift rebirth of Serkhang Dorje Changsang Tendzin Gyatso (*gser khang rdo rje 'chang bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho* – 1780-ca.1848), beginning with the words *rgyal bstan 'dzin mkhan yongs kyi gtsug gi rgyan.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 264.
◆ SH 159: Supplication for the swift rebirth of Shabkar's chief disciple Drubwang Pema Rangdrol (*grub dbang padma rang grol* – dies in 1837), beginning with the words *rtsa brgyud bla ma yid dam zhi khro dang.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 265.
◆ SH 160: Supplication for the swift rebirth of Drubwang Dzogchen Rinpoche (*grub dbang rdzogs chen rin po che*, probably *chos dbyings stobs ldan rdo rje*), who died in 1848, beginning with the words *phan bde'i 'byung gnas mdo rgyud rin po che.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 266.
◆ SH 161: Supplication for the swift rebirth of Jigme Sangpo (*'jigs med bzang po*) abbot of Shelgön (*shel dgon*) monastery near Rebkong, beginning with the words *'jigs bral phyogs las rnam rgyal yongs 'dzin rje.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 266-267.
◆ SH 162: *sprul sku myur byon spyi 'gro.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 267-268. General Supplication for the swift rebirth of a deceased master.

◆ SH 163: *chos spyod smon lam rim pa bde skyid nyi ma rang 'char.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 269-284. An elaborate prayer of dedication and aspirations, to conclude any spiritual practice and accumulation of merit. Composed at a hermitage near Amnye Machen.
◆ SH 164: Beginning with the words *bla ma rdo rje sems dpar gus phyag 'tshal,* a prayer to be reborn in the Abhirati (*mngon dga'*), the Buddhafield of Vajrasattva. Written at Tsari. Vol. 14 (Pha): 285-288.
◆ SH 165: *smon lam sangs rgyas zhing khams grangs med kyi sgo rnams 'byed pa'i lde mig.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 289-296. Aspiration to be reborn in the eastern Buddhafield of Abhirati (*mngon par dga' ba*), written following a dream in which Shabkar's guru urged him to pray to be reborn in this Buddhafield.
◆ SH 166: *rigs lnga'i zhing sbyong smon lam.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 297-310. Prayer to be reborn in the Buddhafields of the Buddhas of the Five Families. Incorporates part of SH 165. Written at *la phyi.*
◆ SH 167: *bsngo ba gser gyi phreng ba.* A prayer used for dedicating virtuous deeds. (See NAM chap. 12, fol. 314). Incomplete manuscript. Not included in this edition.
◆ SH 168: *smon lam rin chen gser gyi phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 311-314. Dedication prayer written on Tsonying island.
◆ SH 169: *smon lam bde skyid kun 'byung.* Aspiration prayer. Not found.
◆ SH 170: *kha ton byas pa'i mjug tu 'don rgyu'i smon lam.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 315-316. Verses to dedicate the merit after performing one's daily prayers.
◆ SH 171: *rgyal khams bde zhing skyid pa'i gsol 'debs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 316. Prayer for peace.
◆ SH 172: Aspiration prayer *(smon lam)* beginning with the words *bslu med dkon mchog gsum gyi byin rlabs kyis...* Vol. 14 (Pha): 317.
◆ SH 173: *mar me'i smon lam.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 318. Prayer to accompany lamp offerings. Composed at Mt. Kailash.
◆ SH 174: *mar me smon lam 'dod 'byung nor bu 'od 'bar* [The Blazing Jewel that Grants all Wishes]. 10 fols. A prayer to accompany lamp-offerings. Mentioned in NAM chap. 9, fol 200b, this piece was probably composed in Lhasa around 1810-11. Not found.
◆ SH 175: Dedication prayer beginning with the words *bla ma dkon mchog gsum la phyag 'tshal lo.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 319-320.
◆ SH 176: *ci bsam 'grub pa'i smon lam.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 321. Prayer
◆ SH 177: *phun sum tshogs pa'i bkra shis.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 323-324. Wishes for auspiciousness.
◆ SH 178: *bkra shis rin chen phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 325-332. Wishes for the fulfillment of all spiritual aspirations.
◆ SH 179: *skar chag gsal ba'i me long las skyabs mgon zhabs dkar pa'i gsung 'bum gyi tho yig.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 333-345. This is the most complete list of Shabkar's writings known. It does not provide a structured arrangement of the masters' works, but is a detailed inventory of the books preserved at Yama Tashikhyil (it even describes the fabric in which the volumes were wrapped). This list proved extremely helpful in the search for, and compilation of, Shabkar's miscellaneous writings.
◆ SH 180: *'gro ba'i mgon po zhabs dkar tshogs drug rang grol gi gsung 'bum gyi bzhugs byang mani phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 347-366. The list of contents of the *zhe chen* edition of Shabkar's *Collected Writings,* and of the supplementary texts (*rgyab chos)* from the *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu* cycle of teachings rediscovered by *gter chen kun bzang bde chen rgyal po.*

MISCELLANEOUS MANUSCRIPTS

Apart from a few pages, these manuscripts do not constitute separate works by Shabkar, and are found in other works. Nevertheless, it seemed of interest to list them, as they provide some insights on the genesis of some of Shabkar's works.
◆ SH-MAN 1: *rnam thar dngos* [Early autobiography]. Manuscript in *dbu med,* 50 fols, kept at Khakar Gonpa, Tarap Dolpo, Nepal. (Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, thereafter referred to as NGMPP, reel No. L 408/10). Not included in this edition, as it has been later incorporated in the final redaction of Shabkar's autobiography.

◆ SH-MAN 2: Autobiographical song, beginning with the verse *pha yul rgya mtsho nang nas thon/ mi med ri khrod mkha' la 'phags/ tshogs drug ran grol nyi gzhon gyi/ rnam thar dri med 'od zer*. Manuscript in *dbu med*, 3 fols. kept at Khakar Gonpa, Tarap Dolpo, Nepal. NGMPP, reel no. L 408/9.
◆ SH-MAN 3: *bya btang tshogs drug rang grol gyis phyogs med ri khrod 'grims pa'i tshe rang gzhan chos la bskul ba'i phyir glu dbyangs blangs tshul rim pa.* [The Tsari Songs]. Manuscript in *dbu med*, 44 fols. NGMPP, reel no. L 315/9. (Folio 17 missing). The contents and arrangement of this *dbu med* manuscript preserved in Trulshik Rinpoche's library are almost identical to the section on *Tsari Songs* in SH 8, but it contains a few short extra pieces.
◆ SH-MAN 4: *bya btang tshogs drug rang grol gyis sems nyid me long gsal la mgur dbyangs gzugs brnyan gang shar rnams yi ge'i gzugs su bris pa.* [Songs Arisen in the Mirror of Mind]. Manuscript in *dbu med* from Dolpo Tarap in Nepal, 76 fols. This manuscript contains seventy-nine songs. Thirteen were incorporated at the beginning of the chap. 11 of NAM, sixty-two which were incorporated in SH 8, and four that are found in neither of these two texts. This collection was gathered by Orgyen Tendzin (*o rgyan·bstan 'dzin*), a disciple of Jinpa Norbu (*sbyin pa nor bu*) active in Dolpo Tarap.
◆ SH-MAN 5: *rje btsun tshogs drug rang grol gyi rnam thar bsdus pa dang gangs rir mdzad pa'i mgur ma·* [Short biography and the Kailash Songs]. Manuscript in *dbu med* from Dolpo Tarap, 43 fols. This second manuscript from Dolpo contains forty-one songs and pieces of advice. Out of these ten were incorporated in chap. 11 of NAM, twenty-one in SH 8 and ten are not found elsewhere.
◆ SH-MAN 6: *bya btang tshogs drug rang grol gyis phyogs med rgyal khams 'grim pa'i tshe dad can snang 'gyur ba'i thabs mgur dbyangs pi wang rgyud mangs* [The Many-Stringed Lute]. Manuscript in *dbu med* from Dolpo Tarap, 117 fols. Of the sixty pieces contained in this collection, fifteen have been incorporated in SH 8, eight in chap. 11 of NAM, twenty in chap. 12, and four in chap. 13. The few pieces original to this collection include a devotional prayer addressed to Jinpa Norbu (*sbyin pa nor bu*) composed by Shabkar at Lapchi, as well as prayers to the lineage of the Mahamudra teachings, to the lineage of Nagarjuna's *zab mo lta brgyud*, and to the *rdzogs chen mkha' 'gro snying thig* lineage. There is also a prayer for Shabkar's long life offered by the government of Tibet (*dga' ldan pho brang*). The collection ends with an appeal to benefactors to support the restoration of the Tashi Gomang (*bkra shis sgo mang*) stupa at Chung Riwoche (*gcung ri bo che*), which must have been written in 1824 (see NAM chap. 14). For a discussion on the relation between these three collections from Dolpo and the genesis of Shabkar autobiography, see TI p.23.
◆ SH-MAN 7: *rang gzhan gyi sems la phan pa'i gsung nye mkho kha shas* [Pieces of Advice to Self and Others]. Manuscript in *dbu med*, 202 fols. NGMPP, reel no. L 178/3. The manuscript of this compendium of Shabkar teachings was lost in the fire that destroyed Thangboche Monastery (Nepal), in 1988. Fortunately, it has been preserved on microfilm through the efforts of the Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project.

RTA PHAG YID BZHIN NOR BU'S CHOS SKOR (*rgyab chos*)

Texts from the *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu* cycle revealed by Terchen Kunzang Dechen Gyalpo *(gter chen kun bzang bde chen rgyal po* – b. 1736).

These were the basis of Shabkar's main spiritual practice and are still practiced today in Shabkar's and other lineages. It therefore seemed helpful for their preservation and transmission to include them in the present edition. Details about Kunzang Dechen Gyalpo, his rediscovered teachings and his lineage are given in Appendix 4, to *The Life of Shabkar*, Snow Lion, 2001.

◆ TP 1: *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i las byang dngos grub rgya mtsho dang zur rgyan 'dod 'byung nor bu bklag chog tu bkod pa pundarika'i do shal.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 367-411. The sadhana of Hayagriva and Vajra Varahi, with supplementary sections, arranged and written by Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche (*'khrul zhig ngag dbang chos kyi blo gros*, born 1924), who received the transmission of this cycle of teachings from Shugsep Jetsun (*shug gseb rje btsun chos nyid bzang mo* – 1852-1953) and offered them to Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (*dil mgo mkhyen brtse rin po che 'gyur med theg mchog bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan*, 1910-1991).

◆ TP 2: *yang gsang rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i dbang chog ye shes bdud rtsi'i bum bzang.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 413-480. Text to bestow the empowerment of the *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu*, written by Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche.

◆ TP 3: *yang gsang rta phag gi las byang dngos grub rgya mtsho.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 481-508. Sadhana of Hayagriva and Vajra Varahi, arranged by Gurung Natsok Rangdrol (*dgu rong sna tshogs rang grol*), in Amdo.

◆ TP 4: *mgon dkar gyi sgrub thabs bla ma mong po'i zhal lung dngos grub rol mtsho.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 509-525. Sadhana of *mgon po dkar po*, the protector of the *rta phag* cycle. Written by Gurung Natsok Rangdrol.

◆ TP 5: *yang gsang rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i skong bshags kyi cho ga padma raga'i phreng ba.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 527-553. Liturgy for the confession and repair ritual related to the *rta phag* sadhana. Written in Amdo by Gurung Gedun Jigme Namdrol (*dgu rong dge 'dun 'jigs med rnam grol*).

◆ TP 6: *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i bzhi ba'i sbyin sreg ye shes me 'od.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 555-570. Pacifying Fire offering related to the rta phag cycle. Written by Nyang Tshampa (*nyang mtshams pa blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma*, 1811-1861)

◆ TP 7: *yang gsang rta phag bsnyen pa'i kha skong gi sbyin sreg 'khyer bde bkod pa sgrib mum 'joms pa'i nyi ma.* Fire ceremony performed when completing a recitation retreat focused on *rtag phag* sadhana. Vol. 14 (Pha): 571-573. Written by Gurung Natsok Rangdrol.

◆ TP 8: *yang gsang rta phag las char 'bebs kyi cho ga phan bde'i dpal sbyin.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 575-596. Ritual to bring rainfall. Author unknown.

◆ TP 9: *gter gsar rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i bsnyen yig nyams chung yid kyi mun sel.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 597-609. Manual for the recitation and meditation precious upon the *rta phag* sadhana. Written by *bya bral skal ldan rig grol.* Manuscript from central Tibet.

◆ TP 10: *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu'i skyed rdzogs.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 611-613. Instructions on the development and completion stages of the *rta phag* practice. Author unknown. Manuscript from central Tibet.

◆ TP 11: *rta phag yid bzhin nor bu las rtsa lung senge nyams rtogs bde chen 'od 'bar.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 615-624. Instructions on yogic practices. Revealed by Tertön Dechen Gyalpo. Manuscript from central Tibet.

◆ TP 12: *rdzogs pa chen po ma rig mun sel gyi sngon 'gro'i zur rgyan.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 627-659. Notes for the preliminaries practice to the Great Perfection teachings of the *rta phag* cycle known as *ma rig mun sel* (TP 13, composed by *chos rgyal nga gi dbang po*). Author unknown.

◆ TP 13: *gter gsar rdzogs chen gyi khrid rim ma rig mun sel ye shes sgron me.* Vol. 14 (Pha): 661-861. Detailed instructions on the practice of the rtag phag cycle leading to the meditation of the Great Perfection, written by Shabkar's main teacher, Chogyal Ngakyi Wangpo, Ngawang Dargye (*chos rgyal ngag gi dbang po ngag dbang dar rgyas*, 1736-1807). Edition based on a manuscript in Shabkar's handwriting preserved in Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's library, and on a xylograph from Rebkong.

A PRELIMINARY NOTE ON THE "RIN.CHEN BZANG.PO TEMPLES" OF RKAN.BZHI, LADAKH*

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This note describes four temples in rKan.bzhi, northern Ladakh, which have received little if any attention from the Western scholarly world. Three of them are reported by Jamyang Gyaltsen, in The History of Ladakh Monasteries,[1] *to have been founded by Rin.chen bZang.po (958-1055),*[2] *while the local monks & scholars claim that only two date to his time. A preliminary examination of all four, during a three day stay in the village last summer, reveals that each construction is quite distinct, with only one, La Cu.rtse certainly going back to the beginning of the Phyi.dar. Another, called here sKya.pa's Temple, may be an ancient foundation, but from the present state of its interior must be described a fine provincial example dating from the early period of the 'Bri.gung establishment in Western Tibet, ca. 13th-14th century.*

While walking in the mountains between Bla.ma gYung.drung (Lamayuru) and Pho.mkhar rDzong last summer,[3] we climbed on the fourth day up from the magnificent arena of sMyu.gu.rtse La.khug (Nyugutse Lakhug),[4] over the sMyu.gu.rtse Pass down to Shilakangrong, then up again to the Yogma La (4700 m), and down along Garlic Valley to camp outside Dumbur, the herding village belonging to the people of rKan.bzhi (Ganshi), a little further down the valley. We visited the small village temple of Dumbur that had been re-consecrated by the 'Bri.gung sKyabs.rje, the Seventh Che.tshang Rin.po.che, bsTan-'dzin Kun-bzang 'Phrin-las Lhun-grub (b. 1946) during his recent tour of the 'Bri.gung monasteries of Ladakh. Both His Holiness, and the minister of Ladakh, rTogs.ldan Rin.po.che (b. 1938), incarnate lamas of the 'Bri.gung school, are active in sponsoring the renovation and revitalisation of monasteries and temples in Ladakh.

The following day after a two hour walk westwards, the beautiful site of rKan.bzhi itself appeared at the junction between four valleys, as its name "Four Flanks" (rKan.bzhi) implies. The multi-ethnic origins

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* When Ladakh opened up in 1975, I was living for a couple of months in Gene's place in Defence Colony, New Delhi. We had just arrived from Japan, and Samten was rushing around battling with the Indian administration, trying to arrange papers for Ama-la to come with us to England. Meanwhile I was heavily pregnant with Ozer, and getting larger day by day, basking in the gently affluent atmosphere of Gene's very special home, with his ever-open-door to hungry, dusty, road-weary, budding Tibetologists. In spite of the temptation, I was quite unable to take a plane or bus up to that rocky, mythic land, and it was not until the summer of 2000 that for the first time I discovered the ancient temples and stone carvings of Mar.yul. In 1975, Gene was already a legendary book publishing figure amongst the Tibetan refugees, and a dear old friend. During those two months I was able to check on the legend. Indeed Gene worked a full day at the Library of Congress office in New Delhi, often partying with various Indian friends in the evening, before retiring to work a full night reading the Tibetan manuscripts that came flooding into his home day after day. The estimate that he only slept four hours a night was perfectly true! We had first met, by chance, in Dharamsala - when the Cultural Revolution was in full swing! Gene arrived from out of the blue in McLeod Ganj one day and invited the few *Injies* who happened to be around to a memorable 1967 New Year's party!

1. *The History of Ladakh Monasteries* (HLM), ed. Jamyang Gyaltsen, published by the All Ladakh Gonpa Society, Leh, 1995, 681-682.
2. See Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, *Rin.chen bZang.po and the Renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet, around the Millennium,* New Delhi 1988; and Gu.ge Khyi.thang.pa Jnana.shris mdzad.pa'i *Lo.tstsha.wa Rin.chen bzang.po'i rnam.thar Shel.'phreng lu.gu rgyud,* Karuna Foundation 1996, on the life of the Great Translator.
3. Marc François, a specialist of Ladakhi and 'Bri.gung history was leading the trek. Thanks to him for the adventure, and for the use of his data-base (hereafter MF).
4. The Wylie spelling for place names is used here except where unknown, and then a phonetic rendering is given.

of the population of the large village reveal to an astonishing degree the intermingling of populations in this territory over millennia of commercial exchange, military invasion and religious implantation.

The village is built on two promontories on the south- and north-west "flanks" of the mountains. Between these, the path rises rapidly to Timthi La; while southwards a gradual rise leads to the rKan.bzhi La, with just a day's walk over to the large dGe.lugs.pa monastery of Rang.'dum.[5] To the North, the pathway descends to the main highway between dNgul.'bigs (Mulbek) and Bla.ma gYung.drung, with He.gnas.sku (or 'E.na.sku) further north. A new motor road is under construction from that juncture, and probably in a couple of years the people of rKan.bzhi will be within reach of the outside world by jeep.

1. Lha.khang Chung (14th July)

The first temple we visited was Lha.khang Chung, the "Little Temple", built in the south-west quarter below the oldest part of the village, near sKya.pa's Chapel (see below, 4.). From the dark interior it would appear to be an ancient establishment, and could at first glance seem to be one of the three mentioned by Jamyang Gyaltsen. However, according to the 'Bri.gung.pa, this temple was founded only about four hundred years ago, by a minister of King Seng.ge rGyal.mtshan (1553, r.1569-1623), under whose reign the bKa'.brgyud lineages were reinforced in Ladakh, several decades before the dGe.lugs.pa expansion in the 17th century. Then it was re-built in the 1880s, several decades after the sacking of the temples of Ladakh by Zorawar Singh Khaluria (1794-1842), vizier of Kishtwar.[6]

Inside the chapel, there are two main stucco images (dating to the restoration?), of Padmasambhava, and of the second sKyab.mgon Che.tshang Rin.po.che of 'Bri.gung Thel, dKon-mchog 'Phrin-las bZang-po (1656-1718, r. 1661-1718), to whom in 1710, King Nyi.ma rNam.rgyal (1651, r. 1687-1717) offered fields near gTing-mo-sgang to compensate for the decline in 'Bri.gung influence, due to the pressure of dGe.lugs.pa expansion in Western Tibet. The statues are executed in the provincial 'Bri.gung or bKa'.brgyud style found in many monasteries in Ladakh. They also have a Prajnaparamita in 100,000 verses.

The next day an ancient ritual ceremonial dance of the "minister", was held by and for the men of rKan.bzhi, with the women looking on from afar. We met local officials, as well as the school teacher and artist, dKon.mchog Nor.bu, and were told about the other temples, and went to visit the A.phyi.khang next.

2. A.phyi.khang (15th July)

This second temple sits above the village on the north-west outcrop, and is also associated with the "Rin.chen bZang.po" group. According to *The History of Ladakh Monasteries,* in 1553, the Lord of Wa.kha with three men of rKan.bzhi offered this temple to the "Dharma Lord" Chos.rje 'Dan.mal as his "offering base" (*mchod.gzhi*). He went there, saw the face of A.phyi, and so had a statue of her made as a "support". Then the site was recognised as belonging to the tradition of the Lord Protector of 'Bri.gung. Later it appears to have fallen into ruins, for the *History of Ladakh Monasteries* says that after some time only the walls were left standing.[7] Just recently it was rebuilt, thanks to the activity of rTogs.ldan Rin.po.che, and today it appears as a rather new A.phyi khang (pron. Achi-khang), or Chapel of the Protector of 'Bri.gung, after whom the famous Alchi (Al.ci chos.'khor) is perhaps named. Some new stucco statues and a thangka of A.phyi painted by the artist dKon.mchog Nor.bu are on display.

5. Just as we arrived in rKan.bzhi on the 14.7.2000, news came that two or three monks, including the abbot of Rang.'dum had been gunned down the day before by Muslim extremists. A curfew was imposed all round from Leh to Kargil. A lone German hiker who was passing by was captured, his throat slit and his body thrown in the river. An emergency meeting was held in Lamayuru the following day, with the two Buddhist ministers of Ladakh, rTogs.ldan Rin.po.che, and Khri.rtse Rin.po.che and other officials of Ladakh.

6. MF.

7. HLM, 682.

3. La Cu.rtse Temple (16th July) [fig. 1]

The next morning we left early to walk to another "Rin.chen bZang.po" temple, outside the village on the way up to the rKan.bzhi Pass. The small *sgom.grva*, or meditation retreat, is called locally La Cu.rtse or Cu.rtse, and is under the administration of Bla.ma gYung.drung.[8] Amongst all four temples of rKan.bzhi, it is this *sgom.grva* that dates without any doubt to the early period of the "Latter Diffusion" of Buddhism in Tibet, i.e. between the last quarter of the 10th through to the end of the 11th century. It is the work of highly skilled Kashmiri artists, and has recently been restored with funds gathered by the local committee, again probably at the behest of rTogs.ldan Rin.po.che. It certainly deserves to be put on the heritage list of Ladakh, if it is not there already. Full photo coverage of the wooden carvings on the site has been made by the present author. The square structure is built against the slope of the mountain, essentially housing a four-pillar temple (temple interior, approx. 8 x 6.30 x 7 m. H), with retreat quarters on the west side.

Before discussing La Cu.rtse in detail we shall make a short digression to Wan.la and Al.ci, since the woodwork in both are useful as sources of comparison. Like La Cu.rtse, Al.ci and Wan.la have early Kashmiri style doors and architectural features, and (for this very reason?) are attributed by local tradition to the Great Translator. However, since art historians question the blanket attributions of the "108 Rin.chen bZang.po Temples", the foundation dates of many of these sites are still open to investigation. It is generally accepted that the group of temples mentioned as belonging to the late 10th century, founded during the reign of Lha Bla.ma Ye.shes.'od, are authentic.[9] These are Kho.char in sPu.rang, rTa.po Cog.la.rgyan in Pi.ti (Sil.cog), Nyar.ma in Mar.yul, Sha.ling in sPu.rig, and mTho.ling in Gu.ge.[10]

Of the three, the main doorway of Wan.la appears to be the simplest in detail (and perhaps the latest), although it is also the most difficult to read, since during the recent restoration by the Archaeological Survey of India, the door and veranda with the original Kashmiri style carvings were covered in thick red mud wash [fig. 2].[11] The wall paintings in the interior, in the main mandala chapel[12] of the Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara are of quite a different style, and must date, like the interior of sKya.pa's Temple in rKan.bzhi (see below n. 4) to ca. 13th century, belonging to the initial period of the 'Bri.gung bKa'.brgyud presence in Western Tibet. The main Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara, or bCu.gcig.zhal sPyan.ras.gzigs image appears to be much older than the paintings, in spite of restoration and repainting, and probably, in the view of this author, goes back to the time of foundation, long before the arrival of the 'Bri.gung.pa.

The main door in Al.ci has also been newly painted in what appear to be chemical colours, thus once again making the fine Kashmiri carvings less easy to read [fig. 3]. They too form a useful comparison with the main doorway of La Cu.rtse in that the deities are seated in niches in a similar fashion. In Al.ci the design and layout is simpler and clearer, and the sculptures on the whole are in better condition. In fact, although all three sites are certainly in "Kashmiri style", they all have quite distinct features, and probably belong to different workshops and different periods of the early Phyi.dar. However, the scenes in the series of five

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8. HLM, 682-3.
9. See Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica,* New Delhi 1988; D. Klimburg-Salter, *Tapo. A Lamp for the Kingdom*, Milan 1997; Luczanits, "Another Rin.chen bZang.po Temple?", in *East & West* 1994, 44/1; 83-98; T. Pritzker, "A Preliminary Report on Early Cave Paintings of Western Tibet", in *Orientations* 1996, 27/6, 26-47. For Wan.la see HLM, 663-673.
10. R. Vitali, "Ladakhi temples of the 13th-14th century: Kan-ji lha-khang in sPu-rig and its analogies with Gu-ru lha-khang", *Kailash*, 1996, VIII/3-4, 255-272; *Nyang.ral Chos.'byung*, Lhasa 1988, 461.
11. Several early stucco figures in Central Asia style have also disappeared from Wan.la, MF.
12. See HLM 663-4, for a description of the layout of Wan.la as a mandala: This (Wan.la) temple is quite different from all others. It is square like a mandala. It has four doors and four *rta.'bab* (?). These are beautifully decorated with precious ornaments, and the artwork is particularly fine. The main "support" is a three storey Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara, on either side are the Eight Close Sons, at the East door is Avalokitesvara Khasapani, and at the West door is the Lord of Sages. On the first two floors the wall paintings are of mandala of the Four Classes of Tantra, the Thousand Buddha, and the lineage of lamas of the bKa'.brgyud.pa school."

niches at the top of the doorway in La Cu.rtse can be found in Al.ci as well. The analysis of these scenes, probably from the life of the Buddha, and of the other figures around the La Cu.rtse doorway, will be the object of another study.

It may be appropriate to mention that in the opinion of this author, the early thirteenth century dating given by Goepper for the founding of Al.ci,[13] needs reconsidering. The 'Bri.gung lineage upon which his argument is based certainly dates to the early thirteenth century, since 'Bri.gung Rin.chen.dpal (1143-1217) and one of his disciples are found at the end of the line. However, since the religious affiliation of the 'Bri.gung bKa'.brgyud was and still is predominantly that of the Anuttarayoga-tantra brought into Tibet by Mar.pa Lotsawa (1012-1096/7) in the mid-11th century, their school follows practices belonging to this class of Tantra. Thus it is logical that the mandala that adorn their temples are in accordance their practice, as seen in Wan.la for example, and in the Lhakhang gSo.ma and Lotsawa Lha.khang of Al.ci.

In the earlier Kashmiri-style temples of Al.ci, i.e. the 'Dus.khang and Sum.rtsegs, the : onographic schema and mandala are from the Yoga-tantra class. These must pre-date the arrival of the 'Bri.gung.pa in Western Tibet, and it is well known that although Rin.chen bZang.po "mastered and expounded, in general, all the basic texts of the Prajnaparamita and Tantra classes, he expounded, in particular, the Yoga-tantra, and transmitted these teachings to his disciples".[14] He too studied the *Guhyasamaja* at the feet of Naropa, but nevertheless, for at least one hundred years (ca. 985-1092), the kings of Western Tibet, who were the benefactors of Rin.chen bZang.po and his school of translators, and who were the main promoters of the "Latter Diffusion of Buddhism" in Western Tibet, took an expressly anti-Anuttarayoga-tantra stance. They were most antagonistic to the group of "Mother Tantras" brought in by 'Brog.mi (993-1074), and Mar.pa Lotsawa (1012-1096/7). Pho.brang Zhi.ba.'od himself became a lotsawa and took over the organising of religious affairs after Rin.chen bZang.po's passing away. Thus the iconographic schema in the early temples of Western Tibet reflects their choice, and we are not surprised to find Yoga-Tantra deities such as Sarvavid-Vairocana dominating the scene.[15]

On the other hand, the 'Bri.gung.pa brought with them their group of Tantras, together with a new style of painting. This, in sharp contrast to the Kashmiri style, is a provincial version of the "rGya.gar lugs" that was prevalent all over Central Tibet in the 12th and 13th centuries.[16] It is precisely this style that is found in the rKan.bzhi temple of the sKya.pa family; in the Wan.la Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara Mandala temple; and in the Lha.khang gSo.ma and Lotsawa Lha.khang of Al.ci.

The fact that, as Goepper pointed out, the 'Bri.gung lineage in Al.ci ends with 'Jigs.rten sKyobs.pa Rin.chen.dpal (1143-1217), and is in Kashmiri or Kashmiri-influenced Western Tibetan style, suggests that it may have been done by a local artist at the very beginning of their presence in Western Tibet (end of 12th century), before their full implantation, i.e. before they brought their own artists with them or trained new ones in the style they were familiar with. Their own artist-monks may have been easier to obtain and to recompense. The name Al.ci (pron. Alchi, or Achi) also may originate from the 'Bri.gung period, since the name of their protector A.phyi (pron. Achi) Chos.kyi sGrol.ma, grand-mother of 'Jigs.rten sKyobs.pa, is so close to the actual name of the temple. If this is in fact the case, then it should be possible to find an earlier name for the Al.ci *chos.skor*.[17]

13. See *Alchi*, by R. Goepper, photography by J. Poncar, Serindia 1997; see below n.25.
14. BA 351-356, Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, New Delhi 1988, 31.
15. See S. G. Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle*, Mandala Book Point, Kathmandu 1998, 3-16, "The Ordinance of Lha Bla.ma Ye.shes.'od", dated ca. 985, 17-54, "An Open Letter by Pho.brang Zhi.ba.'od", dated 1092; R. Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, Dharamsala 1996, 237-240; A. Heller, "Early Ninth Century Images of Vairocana from Eastern Tibet", Orientations 1994, 25/6, 74-79, and "The Caves of gNas.mjal chen.mo" in D. Klimburg-Salter (ed.), *The Inner Asian International Style 12th-14th centuries*, Wien, 133-150.
16. See H. Stoddard, "Early Tibetan Paintings. Sources and Styles", in *Archives of Asian Art*, XLIX, 1966, 26-50.
17. Marc François' data-base; and Tashi Rabgyas, *History of Ladakh*, Leh 1984, 77, gives Al.ci or A.gcig chos.bskor, showing that the spelling is not stable.

The wood carvings on the main door of La Cu.rtse are of particularly fine quality [figs. 4 & 5], rivalling those in Al.ci, yet being executed in a more elaborate style. The recent restoration has been simply done, using traditional materials, with the wood left untouched. While it varies from a light golden-reddish colour (doorways) to a dark reddish colour on the inside (pillars and capitals which are specifically described as juniper)[18] and in protected places, on the outside in the most exposed parts of the temple, the wood is weathered to a whitish raw crackle. The door frame is rather crooked on the inside, and the sculptures on the outside extremely worn in parts. However, this door clearly represents the best of the Kashmiri tradition. The structure follows the typical rectangular Indo-Kashmiri style,[19] with up to three different encased registers of both bas-relief and deep carving. The lintel has the greatest detail with a double-petal lotus frieze along the top section, a jewel & kirttimukha (or lion-face?) pattern in the central section, and five scenes, probably from the life of the Buddha Sakyamuni in the lower register. These are enshrined in architectural niches, each with different ornamentation and structure. They are of the finest quality and are the best conserved of all the wood carvings in La Cu.rtse.

New masonry and layers of whitewash must have been added around the Cu.rtse door frame over the centuries, so now only a single vertical section is visible, with four superimposed niches on either side. These contain single standing or seated deities each occupying his or her own niche. They are badly worn by a thousand years of pilgrims' hands rubbing the door as they enter the temple, and are difficult to identify. However, the top right image may be of a Krodha such as Acala, with his left leg extended to the side.

The narrow door-way to the retreat [fig. 6] is in a simpler style though of the same light golden wood, as are the structures inside. The frieze patterns are of pearl or foliate design, while the lintel has a similar lotus border and bejewelled kirttimukha band just above the door. The structure above this is rather complicated. The centre piece appears to be winged, although the "wings" may represent sow's heads extended on either side. A narrower lintel sits above, with in the middle square section a seated figure that is somewhat damaged. This may be the bodhisattva Manjusri with his right armed raised. It also may represent a princely donor figure, since a flat Western Tibetan turban and typical early hairstyle can be guessed at, with the plaits knotted on either side of the head at shoulder level, as in Ta.po (996), and as in the donor scene beneath the Five Tathagata at the foot of Shel Fort and Monastery, near Leh (mid-10th century).[20]

Inside the retreat there is a comfortable kitchen for practitioners with a cooking range and a proper chimney built inside the wall to the left of the entrance - a rarity in the Tibetan world! This too is likely to have been built by the original Kashmiri artists, since there is a shelf with finely carved floral patterns just to the left side of the chimney, forming part of the whole. A similar chimney may have been built a little later in the same century in Central Tibet, for it is said about Pha Dam.pa Sangs.rgyas (?-1117), the great Indian yogin - who travelled up to Tibet from India, Nepal and China three or four times in the 11th and early 12th century - that when he was in rGyal, 'Phan.yul, "serving the monastic community for a long time, he built a chimney that lit of its own accord",[21] i.e. probably meaning that it had a good upward draw! It may have been similar to this one in La Cu.rtse. A large storeroom or windowless meditation cell is found to the right of the main door as one enters. A small door with similar carvings leads beyond the kitchen area to a small space where a wooden almost vertical ladder goes to the upper storey. Turning right one enters a narrow gallery above the entrance to the main temple, with one of the original pillar-heads still in place. All the openings in this retreat are small, suggesting the extreme winter cold, as well as the seclusion of the

18. HLM, 682: *shug.pa'i ka.ba ka.zhu rnams.*

19. Seen, for example, in the Ajanta cave temples. *Ajanta*, Introduction by A. Bareau, Texts by A. Okada, photos by J.-L. Nou, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris 1991, p.20.

20. The author visited twice in 1999 & 2000.

21. BA, 897: "There (in 'Phan.yul rGyal) he made a stove which is even nowadays known for its remarkable way of kindling without blowing." See *Deb.sngon*, vol.2, 1047: *De'i tshe dam.pas rGyal.du dge.'dun gyi g.yog yun.ring.du mdzad/ thab cig kyang bcas.pa da.dung yang me rang.'bar.du 'gro.ba'i ngo.mtshar.can yang yod//*

practitioners. From a first impression, and in spite of renovation of the terraced roofing in the main chapel, much of the wooden structure must date back to the period of foundation.

Inside the four pillar chapel (approx. 8 x 6.30 x 7 H), the "Thousand Buddha" wall paintings date, according to *The History of Ladakh Monasteries* to a restoration carried out after ca. 1870,[22] by which time the temple had fallen into disrepair. Two decades later, ca.1891, Chos.grub bSod.nams bKra.shis of sTag.ma gCig.pa became caretaker and restored the site. It was he who had the *stong.sku* wall paintings executed.

The tall pillars in dark red juniper have fluted vertical lines recalling columns in both ancient India, and in the Greco-Bactrian world. The two rear capitals (nearest the altar) are finely carved with geometric vine-scroll patterns and Buddha figures in the central sections [fig. 7]. These recall to a certain degree the sculptures on the outside of the Al.ci Sum.rtsegs. Two more weathered eleventh century capitals with similar kinds of ornamentation have been used to form the present altar. They may have come either from the two front pillars in the temple (which have somewhat simpler capitals), or more likely, they were taken from the rather damaged gallery above the main door, where as is mentioned above, another similar weather-worn capital is still in place [fig. 8].

Four beam-ends, protruding at the tops of the walls on either side of the temple on in parallel with the four pillars are carved to form bright-eyed, bushy-tailed leonine forms painted recently in white, with their eyebrows, moustaches and tails green, recalling those seen not only in Wanla & Alchi, but in temples all over the Tibetan world. Here the form is rounder with the well-carved face and underbelly being most visible. On the back wall a square niche contains two medium-sized clay stupa.

But who was the founder of La Cu.rtse? We know that the Great Lotsawa went twice or thrice to Kashmir, firstly in 975, then again in 996, from whence he returned six years later, ca.1002, with thirty-three artists.[23] During his long life, he attended on many teachers, and invited numerous pandits to Western Tibet. He was the chief translator of his school for well over half a century, with many disciples gathering around from mNga'.ris, dBus and gTsang. The *Blue Annals* gives a list including his four "heart sons", Lo.chung rNgog Legs.pa'i Shes.rab (1011-1077), Gur.shing brTson.'grus rGyal.mtshan of Mang.nang,[24] gZhon.nu Shes.rab of Gra (1014-1096), and sKyi.nor Ye.shes.dpal of Khri.thang; a further four were An.ston Grags.rin of sPu.hrangs, rGya Ye.shes Tshul.khrims, Gung.pa Ye.shes, and dKon.mchog.brtsegs of Mar.yul (founder of Al.ci),[25] who were disciples of both Rin.chen bZang.po and Lo.chung Legs.pa'i Shes.rab. Shangs Sum-ston Ye-shes-'bar, and two from Myang.stod, rKyang.pa Chos.blo of rGyang.ro sPe'u.dmar, and lCe.zhar, also attended on the Lo.chen for several years.[26] The translation activity continued long after his passing away, with Tibetan, Kashmiri and Indian scholars continuing to work side by side, as is witnessed by the 1076 Council of the Fire Dragon in mTho.ling,[27] and by the translation activities and edict of Pho.brang Zhi.ba.'od in 1092.

The very fine quality of the wood carvings of La Cu.rtse, and the oral tradition in rKan.bzhi (cf. sKya.pa's temple, below), do in fact suggest that this is a "Rin.chen bZang.po temple". Since we do not have the list of the "108", and it is not mentioned in the few we know of, it is impossible to affirm that this small retreat was really founded by him. However, it was certainly built during his life-time or soon afterwards,

22. HLM 682.
23. Gu.ge Khyi.thang.pa, 17-19; Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, 31; Vitali, op.cit, 188, 233, 241.
24. Approximate dates (1018?-1079) etc., are as proposed in MF.
25. According to MF. See L. Fournier & P. Pal, *Alchi. Une merveille de l'art bouddhique.* Ladakh, New Delhi 1983, 19, where the author also considers that the Lotsawa Lhakhang was founded probably during the lifetime of Rin.chen bZang.po.
26. BA, 352-354. Tashi Rabgyas, 81-82, gives a different list, taken from Khyi.thang.pa's biography, 33.
27. See Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, Rin.chen bZang.po and the Renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet, around the Millennium, New Delhi 1988, 30, for references to the council. According to *Rva.Lo.tsa.ba'i rnam.thar,* mTsho.sngon 1990, 205-206, the following Tibetan masters were present: rNgog.lo Blo.ldan Shes.rab, gNyan.lo Dar.ma.grags, bTsan Kha.bo.che, Khyung.po Chos.brtson, Mar.thung Dad.pa Shes.rab, Mang.'or Byang.chub Shes.rab, Dvags.po dBang.rgyal. See also Vitali 1996.

perhaps by one of his first or second generation disciples, such as Mar-yul Lo-tsa-ba dKon-mchog-brtsegs, or his co-disciple, dge-bshes Gung-pa Ye-shes who taught in Nyar.ma and founded Kar.sha, where fragments of Kashmiri wall paintings are to be seen. Another possible candidate is Zangs-dkar Lo-tsa-ba 'Phags-pa Shes-rab (1042-1115), the disciple of An.ston Grags.pa Rin.chen. He was a great scholar-ascetic from Western Tibet, who continued Rin.chen bZang.po's line of the Yoga-tantra,[28] and is one of the best known lotsawa of the following generation. He contributed to the diffusion of Buddhist texts in Mar.yul and Zangs.dkar, and other areas of sTod mNga'.ris. He took part in the Council of the Fire Dragon,[29] just at the time when he was translating the treatise on logic, *Tshad.ma rnam.'grel.gyi rgyan, Pramanavarttikalamkara.*[30] He also took responsibility for the rehabilitation of the Jo.khang in Lhasa, probably during the following decade, in the 1080s.[31]

4. Kya.pa's Chapel

According to Jamyang Gyaltsen, this is the third of the "Rin.chen bZang.po" temples in rKan.bzhi. This is the one that "was given by Rin.chen bZang.po into the care of a villager called sKya.pa, and since he (& his family) looked after it as if it were their own 'offering place', it has not been damaged or destroyed and can still be seen just as it was".[32]

This, the last and smallest of the four temples, lies below the old part of the village of rKan.bzhi, nearby the Lha.khang Chung. The building consists of a simple square structure, with a single chapel inside measuring approx. 4 x 4 x 3 m. H. In front of the chapel is a relatively spacious vestibule facing south with a beaten earth floor. The wall paintings and sculptures inside suggest a date considerably later than Rin.chen bZang.po, probably going back, as in Wan.la, to the initial period of 'Bri.gung influence in Western Tibet, ca. 13th-14th century. It is possible that the original building was constructed at an earlier date, but the simple wood carvings give no hint as to any technical or artistic link with La Cu.rtse.[33]

The entrance to the vestibule is supported by a single pillar and crossbeam with some carved and stucco motifs that are rustic in comparison to the refined sophistication of La Cu.rtse. A triple jewel is carved at the centre inside of the beam, above the pillar.

The doorway into the temple is square and very low with the wooden door closing from within. The floor is several centimetres lower than the vestibule. This is an ancient feature of Tibetan architecture that helps with isolation from the cold. It is found in many houses in Tibet from Neolithic times onwards, notably in the Bar.khor in Lhasa. Here, the chapel is built in the fundamental one pillar unit size also known to Tibetan architecture from early times. At the rear, a simple low altar has three half life-size stucco deities enthroned in a similar early naive Western Tibetan style that was inspired by the art in Central Tibetan monasteries of the 12th ca. and 13th centuries, brought to the West by the 'Bri.gung bKa'.brgyud Ri.pa, or "Men of the Mountains" yogins. The three stucco figures are of sPyan.ras.gzigs Yi.ge drug.pa (centre), sMan.bla (proper right) and Green Tara (proper left) [fig. 9]. According to Jamyang Gyaltsen, the mandala wall paintings accompany the three images.[34]

28. BA, 354. Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, 32-33.
29. *Rva.lo'i rnam.thar*, 206; Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica* II, 30-33.
30. *Tibetan Tripitaka*, Beijing ed., Suzuki catalogue Tokyo 1962, no. 5719.
31. Vitali, *Early Temples of Central Tibet*, Serindia 1990, chapter 3.
32. HLM 681. sKya.pa, or sKya.mi usually mean simply "layman", in Central Tibetan dialect.
33. Christian Luczanits, "Early Buddhist Wood Carvings from Himachal Pradash", in *Art of Tibet. Selected Articles, from Orientations 1981-1997*, 247-255. The wood carving in the temples of Kojarnath, Tabo, and especially the Lotsawa Lha.khang in Ribba, central Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh are extremely close to that in the La Cu.rtse temple in rKan.bzhi.
34. As *sgo.rdzogs* (?). This unusual term appears again, HLM 682, this time together with the "wood sculpture", after mention of the restoration made at La Cu.rtse, in 1819, by the new caretaker, Chos.grub bSod.nams bKra.shis of sTag.ma gCig.pa: *ldebs.ris.su Sangs.rgyas stong.sku bzhengs yod/ sngar sgo.rdzogs dang shing.bskos kyi bzo khyad phul.du.byung.ba yod kyang, da.lta shug.pa'i ka.ba bzhi.rnams la brkod yod.pa.tsam ma.gtogs gzhan.rnams nyams.nas mi.'dug//*

The wall paintings are in a style that is coherent with the stuccos, though they are in a more pristine condition. In the areas where there is no damage, e.g. at the back of the shrine, no sign of repainting can be seen, and the colour and line are perfectly clear [fig. 10]. The statues, on the other hand, may have been restored and probably have been given several layers of new paint over the centuries. The mandala on either side nearest the doorway are badly damaged by water infiltration from the roof, although it is possible in all cases except one to establish the identity of the main deity. Two donor scenes are shown on either side, on a level with the altar, illustrating no doubt the founding celebrations, and the guests of honour.

A long inscription in *dbu.med* script accompanies the scene on the right, as one faces the altar. It is somewhat effaced and very difficult to read. However a certain number of elements can be gleaned, amongst which customary laudatory verses glorifying the Buddhist teachings which are likened to the sun's rays; considerations on the preciousness of this human existence; and the offering of the virtuous actions of the body, speech and mind. The Lord of Death appears, suggesting that the inscription was made to commemorate someone's passing away. A king and (his?) queen are mentioned, as are four/the fourth (?) vihara, and the (Prajnaparamita in) Eight Thousand Verses. The *yon.bdag*, or sacristan's name was also probably recorded. The inscription ends with customary humiliatory regrets on the part of the author, requesting learned scholars to be patient with any mistakes he has made.

The Inscription

The inscription is written in black, uneven, closely written *dbu.med* script, in eighteen lines of quatrains with approximately seven verses to each line. It is covered with varnish and damaged in places. It is included here, in spite of the textual problems, as a basis for a possible better reading in the future.

l.1, *Om svasti// mKhyen.brtse'i 'od.zer bye.ba phrag.rgya[brgya] yis/ chos.stong 'od.gsal 'spro.bye... smun... nyi.dbang.po 'gro blo mun.sel. ma lus kun gsel[sel].bas/ thub.dbang bstan.pa... don.gnyis mar rgyin? skyobs.pa sangs.rgyas.dang/ bden.gnyis mthar.phyin dbang...*

l.2, *... dang mkhyen gnyis mthar.phyin.'phags.pa'i dge.'dun gtso... thug.skyabs lags... ma 'jig.rten khyed.par mi.mdzad de.ste..../ 'e.ma.ho/ dal.'byor...*

l.3, *don.med stong.bya bsam/ 'e.ma.ho/ lus.kyi rgyal.sras mchod.pa... ngag.gi... yid.kyi rtag.tu dge.ba.../ 'e.ma.ho... tshogs gnyis 'phrul.la... ji.phyir...*

l.4, *lus... legs.par sems.*

l.5, *?byol.lo gnas.tu...is snang.bsgoms <u>gShin.rje'i dgra srung rnam</u> 'di[r] slebs dus g.... thar.pa'i lam dal.'byor thob.pa...*

l.6, *dad.pa...*

l.7, *... ba'i chos.la zhen.na...*

l.8, *nor kyang... sngon.du byas.pa...*

l.9, *... gyi gying[?].pa'i mchog byung... ston.pas...*

l.10, *phu...*

l.11, *ldeng.kyi rigs...*

l.12, *<u>rgyal.po</u>...*

l.13, *... du <u>bzhengs</u>.../ 'e.ma.ho ya.rabs.rnams ni... <u>btsun.mo</u>... stag.sha...*

l.14, *... pha.ma rten.du bzo*

l.15, *<u>gtsug.lag.khang bzhi.pa</u>*

l.16, *... [?] <u>brgyad.stong.pa</u>... de la sogs.pa rgya ma mang du... kyi... pha.ma'i snying sdug lha'i gtso dga' byas/ gnyis.pa... 'di khye grags bcod phyi.mi...*

l.17, *... dad.pa nas skye shi... chos du blangs// <u>yon.bdag</u>... kun blo nur?*

l.18, *snyan.sngags nor.bu'i 'phreng.ba 'dos ['dis?]/ rig.pa'i gnas... legs sbyangs.pa'i mkhas.par gyur... tshe... skyon nongs.par.gyur na mkhas rnams bzod.par mdzod/ mi shes slong.pa rnams pas...//*

The Wall Paintings

A frieze of white geese in different supple postures runs all round the top of the wall paintings. Behind the three statues on the altar at the top is a bKa'.brgyud lineage. The central deities of five of the six mandala may be identified as follows (see diagram, going alternately from proper right of the deities on the altar, to proper left). Only the last, VI, is unidentifiable.

Mandala

I. Amitayus. Guru Padmasambhava is seated at the top left of the mandala, with an Indian master (?) and monks to the top right. Below is the donor scene with dancers.
II. Crowned Vairocana with different forms of Avalokitesvara in the outer four corners. The inscription is below this mandala.
III. The Five Tathagata. They have a large entourage, including monks inside the mandala. Manjusri and Prajnaparamita (?) or else Manjusri's prajna are seated to the top right and left of the mandala.
IV. The Eleven-headed Avalokitesvara, with monks inside the mandala.
V. Mahakala with two arms. He is surrounded by twelve *krodha*, four offering goddesses, and four guardians of the gates.
VI. The sixth mandala is badly effaced by water infiltration. It is impossible to establish the identity. Sakyamuni with scenes from his life is found in registers below IV & VI.

The presence of monks inside the sacred space of the mandala is interesting and reinforces the relatively early dating. In later times such an intrusion of human elements - even lamas - into the sublime area of the Body, Speech, and Mind zones of the mandala seems to disappear. A 12th century Tibetan mandala from Central Tibet includes a whole family, with father, mother and two sons, being initiated into the practice of the yidam deity by "Guru Padmasambhava" himself. They are seated within one of the four main circles of "deities" that surround the central figure of Che.mchog Heruka.[35] Thus it is refreshing to see monks in a similarly unorthodox, but eminently practical position - from a ritual point of view - in these early 'Bri.gung mandala.

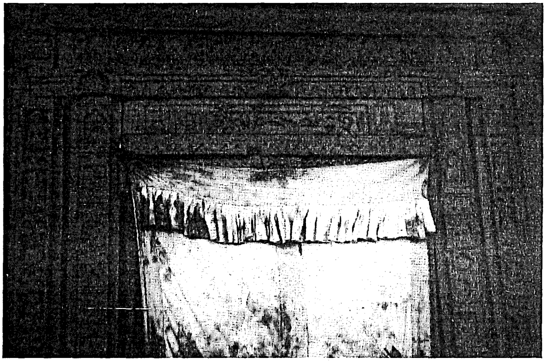
Thus, in spite of the local tradition, the four temples of rKan.bzhi - as they stand today - are all quite distinct in period, construction, content and style. Only one, La Cu.rtse, may be said to belong with certainty to the Rin.chen bZang.po period. This and the other early chapel belonging to the "sKya.pa family" are small but important cultural heritage sites of Ladakh. The superbly sophisticated 11th century Kashmiri wood carvings in La Cu.rtse, and the fine 13th-14th century 'Bri.gung paintings in sKya.pa's Temple, are clear evidence of rKan.bzhi's connections with main-stream historical and religious processes taking place in the larger sTod mNga'.ris skor.gsum context of Western Tibet over the centuries. They demonstrate the high mobility of the population, as well as a real concern, and even a real struggle, on the part of the Buddhist masters in the spread and maintenance of the teachings in the distant valleys of their territory, in past and present times.

35. Published in the Japanese version of *Wisdom and Compassion,* Tokyo 1998, pl. 67.

Figures



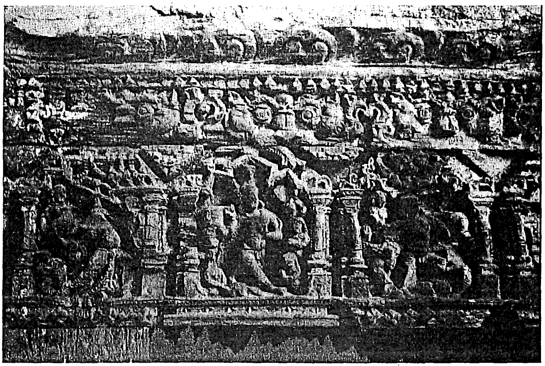
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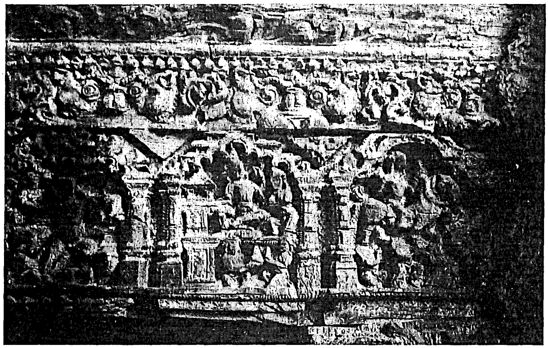
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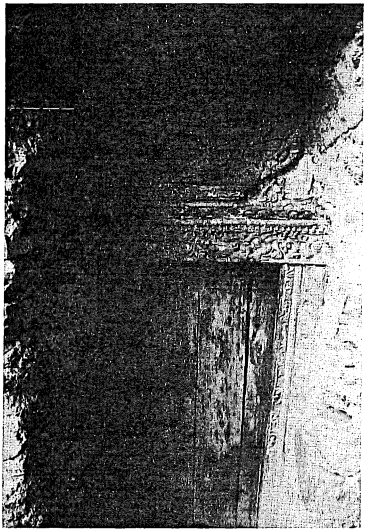
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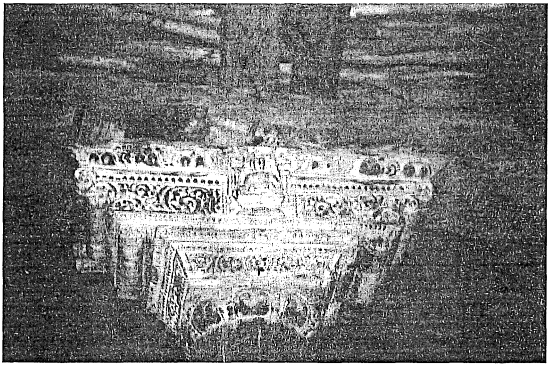
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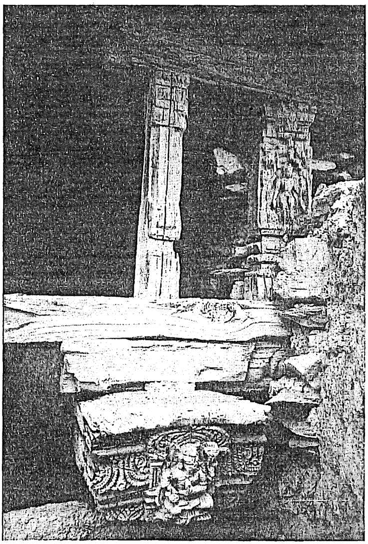
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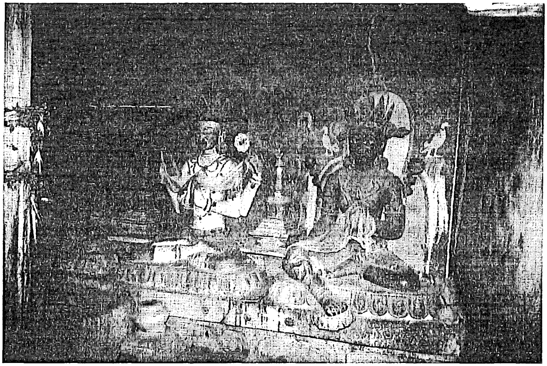
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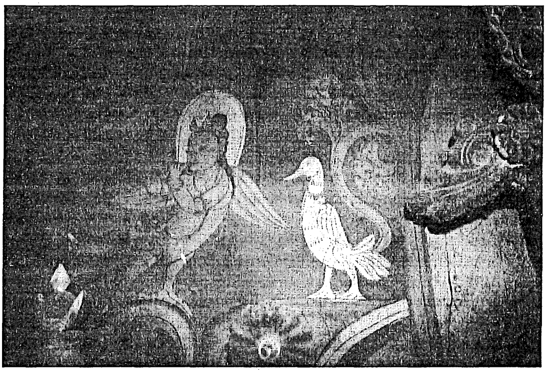
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10

ON THE DATES OF THANG STONG RGYAL PO*

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In a footnote to his 1970 introduction to *Shangs pa bka' brgyud gser phreng* Gene Smith observed: "The dating of Thang-stong rgyal-po is an extremely complicated problem. According to the oldest edition of his biography (*Grub pa'i dbang phug chen po lcags zam pa thang stong rgyal po'i rnam mtshar kun gsal nor bu'i me long* in ff. 181) by Lo-chen 'Gyur-med-bde-chen, Thang-stong was born in *lcags-mo-glang* (1361 or 1421). The last year mentioned in the work itself is *sa-mo-yos* (1459 or 1519) when his death is nearing. The colophon tells us that the work was completed in *sa-pho-byi-ba* (1588 or 1648), 125 years after the death of Thang-stong (1464 or 1524)."[1]

Several sources on Thang stong rgyal po have become available after Gene Smith wrote this short observation thirty years ago, based on a forcibly limited number of documents. The publication of the volumes of the *Thang stong snyan brgyud* was followed by Cyrus Stearn's MA thesis and Janet Gyatso's Ph.D. thesis dedicated to him.[2] Finally, two more biographies of the great master, written by direct disciples, were published almost fifteen years after Gene's remarks, to which a recently found biography should be added.

Making use of the presently available biographical documents about him, the aim of this paper is to focus on the issue of Thang stong rgyal po's life span, raised by Gene Smith, wander a little through five available biographies of Thang stong rgyal po,[3] and read between their lines, which will enable me to attempt a new suggestion about his dates, and probe the meaning and reason of his long seclusion before death an inch further.

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* I contribute here a short essay on a subject related to Gene's past research. Besides taking care of the release of this Festschrift, this small token is a personal sign of my gratitude and great respect.
This article has been translated by Lobsang Thargay (New Delhi) from the Tibetan. I wish to acknowledge the kind help of Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy for the initial editing; Roberto Vitali for the final editing and for working at the translation of some passages; and Victoria Conner who had a last look at the English. However, any mistake or shortcoming is entirely mine.

1. Please see *Shangs pa Bka' brgyud gser 'phreng: A golden rosary of lives of masters of the Shangs pa dkar brgyud pa Schools*, published by Tashi Yangphel Tashigang, Leh, 1970, English introduction, footnote no. 10 on p. 4. *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, bar cha, Beijing, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985, p. 1141, has an entry on Thang stong rgyal po identified as "Kam kam pa Brtson 'grus bzang po (1313-1385)." This needs further research. See also Mig dmar blo bzang, "Grags can gyi lo rgyus mi sna grub thob Thang stong rgyal po'i skor rags tsam gleng ba," Bod ljongs slob grwa chen mo'i rig deb, 2002, 'don 'thengs gnyis pa, pp. 29-36; *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, Krung go'i Bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2002, pp. 1031-1035. See Ho We & Bsod nams dbang 'dus, *Bod kyi nang bstan dgon pa'i ldebs ris sgyu rtsal, Fresco Art of the Buddhist Monasteries in Tibet,* compiled by the Administration Commission of Cultural Relics of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, Chengdu, 1994, p. 356, in which a portrait of Thang stong rgyal po painted on a wall of Pho brang dmar po is reproduced. Three different sets of dates of grub thob Lcags zam pa's birth and death appear in the trilingual caption accompanying the plate (i.e. his dates are given as 1361-1485 in the Chinese text of the caption, 1385-1509 in the Tibetan text and 1361-1445 in the English!).
2. Cyrus Stearn, *The Life and Teachings of the Tibetan Saint Thang-stong rgyal-po, "The King of the Empty Plain,"* M.A. Diss., University of Washington, Seattle, 1980; and Janet Gyatso, *The Literary Transmission of the Tradition of Thang stong rgyal po: A Study of Visionary Buddhism in Tibet*, Ph.D. Diss., Berkeley University of California, 1981.
3. I have consulted the following biographies of Thang stong rgyal po. Four are major biographies of him, and one a brief supplementary biography about his passing:
Rje grub thob chen po lcags zam pa'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho by his direct main disciple La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan. Published as *The Collected Works (*gsung 'bum*) of Thang stong rgyal po* Vol. 1 by the National Library of Bhutan, Thimphu, 1984.
Bla ma Thang stong rgyal po'i rnam thar gsal ba'i sgron me, by his direct disciples Dkon mchog dpal bzang and Spa gro ba Bde ba bzang po of Bhutan. Published as *The Collected Works (*gsung 'bum*) of Thang stong rgyal po* Vol. 2 by the National Library of Bhutan, Thimphu, 1984.

The paucity of dates

In the first place, we cannot avoid noticing the relative absence of clear dating in the biographies. The *rnam thar* by his direct disciple La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan, entitled the *Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*, has 283 folios and the earliest appearance of a date is found as far down as on folio 79,[4] which is the Water Tiger year (1422). Dates given according to the sexagenary cycle occur only nine times and, on eleven occasions, they are given according to the duodenary cycle.[5] The *Gsal ba'i sgron me* by his direct disciples Dkon mchog dpal bzang and 'Brug spa gro ba Bde ba bzang po, in 108 chapters (the verso of the folio 15 is damaged) and 294 folios, has the first date only after folio 170, which is a Male Water Dragon year[6] (either 1412 or 1472).[7] The sexagenary cycle is used only once in the biography, and the duodenary cycle on eleven occasions.[8]

Byang ngam ring pa dKon mchog dpal bzang's *Gsal ba'i sgron me*, rather a commentary than a canonical biography conceived in chronological order, contains a fifteen-stanza prayer by an unknown author dedicated to Thang stong rgyal po, which begins saying: "with the aim of taming the sentient beings of the degenerate time in Tibet" (*snyigs dus bod khams 'gro ba 'dul ba'i phyir*)[9], which was supplemented by bDe ba bzang po. The prayer does not say: "In such a year this happened ...", as is normal in the account of ordinary beings, but it describes the body, speech, mind, qualifications and activity in the three realms (i.e. those exoteric, esoteric and innermost secret), typical of realised beings. The *Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* and the *Gsal ba'i sgron me* were copied from an old original kept in Bhutan and there are many omissions and mistakes that have crept in.

Thang stong rgyal po's dates as given in the sources

None of his early biographies, whether the *Gsal ba'i sgron me,* the *Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* or the *Kun gsal sgron me,* mention the year of his birth. According to the later *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long* (1609) by Lo chen 'Gyur med dbe chen, a descendant of Thang stong rgyal po, he was born in the Earth Ox year of

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Grub pa'i dbang phyug chen po lcags zam pa Thang stong rgyal po'i rnam par thar pa kun gsal sgron me bdud rtse'i 'phreng ba mthong bas yid 'phrog, by Sngags rams pa Kun dga' bsod nams grags pa dpal bzang, a son of La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan, written at the behest of one Blo gros rgyal mtshan, a descendant of Thang stong rgyal po. The document is in the National Archives, Ramshahpath, Kathmandu, reel number AT 85/11. I would like to thank my friend Dr. Roberto Vitali for not only informing me about the existence of this manuscript, but for also kindly sending me the microfilm of it.

A small supplementary biography to item 3 (see above in the same note), entitled *Grub thob chen po'i rnam thar phyi ma las mya ngan las 'das pa'i skor,* appended to the latter.

Dpal grub pa'i dbang phyug brtson 'grus bzang po'i rnam par thar pa kun gsal nor bu'i me long by Lo chen 'Gyur med bde chen, a descendant of Thang stong rgyal po, in 1609. Also see its published version: *Thang rgyal rnam thar*, Chengdu, Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982.

4. *Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* (hereafter NTGT in the notes) p. 158:2.
5. Sprel lo (1428) NTGT, p.170:3; sa mo bya (1429) NTGT, p. 183:4; lcags pho khyi (1430) NTGT, p. 275:2; phag lo (1431) NTGT, p.285:5; byi lo (1432) NTGT, p. 285:5; glang lo (1433) NTGT, p. 286:4; stag lo (1434) NTGT, p. 299:1; yos lo (1435) NTGT, p. 299:3; 'brug lo (1436) NTGT, p. 322:3, p.329:4; me mo sbrul (1437) NTGT, p. 331:3; sbrul lo (1437) NTGT, p. 343:3; sa pho rta'i zla 1 tshes 1 (1438) NTGT, p. 344:4; byi lo (1444) NTGT p. 358:1; rta lo (1450) NTGT, p. 469:2; sa mo sbrul (1449) NTGT, p. 473:5; me pho byi ba (1456) NTGT, p. 488:5; 'brug lo (1460) NTGT, p. 528:2; shing pho 'brug (1484) NTGT, p. 561:2; sa mo bya (1429) and shing pho 'brug (1484) NTGT, p. 561:3.
6. *Rnam thar gsal ba'i sgron me* (hereafter NTSG in the notes) p. 340:5.
7. 1412 is too early and 1472 is too late, hence I question the accuracy of the year element (Water) and suggest that this is a mistake that should be investigated.
8. 'brug lo (1412/1448) NTSG, p. 348:6; rta lo (1426/1450) NTSG, p. 348:6; lug lo (1427/1451) NTSG, p. 351:3; 'brug lo (1436 and 1448) NTSG, p. 354:1, p.356:6, 366:2; rtag (sic) lo (1446/1458) NTSG, p. 394:5; 'brug lo (1448/1460) NTSG, p. 440:4, 442:1; bya lo (?1381, 1441, 1453 and 1465) NTSG, p. 508:1.
9. In 1929 Rdza sprul Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu was assigned by the Tibetan Government to restore the Gcung Ri bo che sku 'bum mchod rten, which he could accomplish in 1932. A Guru Yoga text dedicated to Thang stong rgyal po, entitled *Grub pa'i dbang phyug Thang stong rgyal por mchod cing bstod pa'i bla mchod byin rlabs sprin phung*, and written in 1932, is derived from *Rnam thar Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* as its author says. See the Collected Works of Dzatrul Ngawang Tenzin Norbu, Kathmandu, 2004, Vol.1, pp. 345-374.

the 6th *rab byung* (1361) at sunrise, on the 10th day of the 1st Tibetan month.[10] The even later *Baidurya dkar po* by Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho[11] and the *rNying ma'i chos 'byung*[12] by Bdud 'joms Rinpoche (possibly styled after the latter text) state that he was born in the Wood Ox year of the 6th *rab byung* (1385). Therefore, if one must concede that he was born in an Ox year of the 6th *rab byung*, this would have to be either the Iron Ox year (1361), the Water Ox year (1373) or the Wood Ox year (1385).[13]
The *Kun gsal me long* has this to say about Thang stong rgyal po's death:

"Two sixty-year-cycles plus five years [after his birth], [Thang stong rgyal po] died in the Female Wood Snake year of the 8th sixty-year-cycle (1485), on the 4th day of the 1st Tibetan month."[14]

Similarly, in a small biography, supplementary to the *Ngo-mtshar rgya mtsho* and entitled *Grub thob chen po'i rnam thar phyi ma las mya ngan las 'das pa'i skor* (henceforth *Myang 'das*), it is stated:

"The *grub thob chen po*, at the age of 128, turned his body into a huge formation of light and rose about seven *dpag tshad* above his retreat hut on the 4th day of the 1st month, on which Buddha Shakyamuni performed miracles, in the year of the Snake."[15]

Hence this account suggests that the year of his passing occurred in the Female Wood Snake of the 8th *rab byung* (1485).

According to the *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, Thang stong rgyal po was born in the Iron Ox year (1361), and died at the age of 125 in the Female Wood Snake year (1485). In the view of the *Phyi ma las mya ngan las 'das pa'i skor*, he died at the age of 128 in the same year (1485). Bdud 'joms Rinpoche holds that he was born in the Wood Ox year of the 6th *rab byung* (1385), and died at the age of 125 (1509/1510).[16]

Rather than trying to go for historical accuracy, I think that what needs to be pondered is whether Thang stong rgyal po lived for as long as 125 or 128 years, or whether his disciples and patrons, for various reasons, just made it seem that he lived to such an exceedingly old age. What triggered my doubts is this quotation in the *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*:

"Again, one day, the *grub thob chen po* told Rje btsun Chos kyi sgron me: 'I shall die in such a manner that no one has seen in the past and no one will be able to see in the future.' Bde legs Chos sgron asked the *Rje btsun ma* what this meant and she replied: 'It means that the way he will die is going to be so unique that no one else before was so worthy to have it.' A prophecy on his life span says: 'Eighty [years] and a decade[17] is the limit of his life span. If the essence of the goddess of longevity (Tshe 'dzin lha mo) is practised, a longer life may be attained.'"[18]

The *Myang 'das rnam thar* has a similar passage:

"O rgyan chen po said: 'The limit of the life span of the great being Lcags zam pa will be eighty years and a decade. By practising the female deity of longevity (Tshe 'dzin lha mo), it is possible to live longer.'"[19]

Keeping his death a secret

I think that Thang stong rgyal po was born in 1385, the later one of the two proposed dates, and died either at the age of 61 in the Fire Tiger year (1446), or at the age of 73 in the Earth Tiger year (1458). Great secrecy

10. *Thang rgyal rnam thar*, Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, p. 18:2
11. Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Baidurya dkar po*, Vol. 1, Dehra Dun, 1978, f. 20ba 5.
12. *Gsang chen sgna 'gyur rnying ma'i chos 'byung lha dbang g.yul rgyal*, Kalimpong, 1963, f. 289na4 and 399na1.
13. Thang stong rgyal po took the monastic vow from Bla ma Nyi ma bzang po at Dgon pa Byang sdings. He received his full vow from Dka' lnga pa Dpal 'byor shes rab at Mdog stod Skya ra'i dgon pa, and was given the name of Dge slong Brtson 'grus bzang po.
14. *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, p. 339:17.
15. *Myang 'das rnam thar*, f. 162na4.
16. *Gsang chen sgna 'gyur rnying ma'i chos 'byung lha dbang g.yul rgyal*, f.290n2.
17. Here we need to check the original Dbus gtsang and Sde dge editions of *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long* to see whether the Zhe chen Drung yig (late 18th century) changed "brgyad bcu phrag gcig" into "brgya bcu phrag gcig."
18. *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, p. 338:17-339:5.
19. *Myang 'das rnam thar*, f. 161ba7.

was then maintained about his death either for 39 years in the former case or 27 years in the latter case, and the secret was finally revealed 100 years after his birth.

We get a hint of the delay in revealing the death of Thang stong rgyal po in the *Gsal ba 'i sgron me* which says:

"The *grub thob chen po* stopped talking in the 6th month of the Tiger year. He even blocked the ventilation of his circular-shaped room (*gzims khang gzhu sgor mo*). He could neither be seen nor his speech heard. It was as though he was not there. In front of his circular room hundreds of disciples, patrons and devotees, men and women, assembled and arranged ritual offerings beyond imagination. They prayed and supplicated: 'If you don't want to show yourself in person, [at least] speak to us. If you don't want to speak, [at least] give us a note on your *samta* ("writing tablet").' For three months, he did not show himself; neither spoke nor issued a note on his writing tablet and did not eat. After three months he passed a note on his writing tablet which said: 'If anyone respects my word, forsake this life and be kind-hearted.' Other than that, he did not say [more]. The note was written on the writing tablet in *lantsa, wartu la*, some Tibetan and Dakini's script. [The disciples] pleaded: 'If the note is issued during the night, the readers need light, [while] day and night are the same for the one who writes.' The answer to the supplication was given on the writing tablet which was not different from a spoken reply. His body looked stout and huge unlike the past. Upon seeing the features of his face everyone who had gathered there was extremely happy. Everyone made a request and gave offerings. On that day he accepted eighty helpings of food. Even the ordinary beings who were present had a pure vision (*dag pa 'i snang ba*)."[20]

The text continues in the following terms:

"The great disciples, who had gone to Dbus gtsang, Mon and Kong po to collect offerings, told the *grub thob chen po*: '[You], *grub thob chen po*, are [always] in retreat. No audience is granted to those who come near. The whole of Tibet, the Snowland, says that the *grub thob chen po* died. They do not believe [that you are alive]. Although we tell them that the *grub thob chen po* did not die, they don't think it is true.' The *grub thob chen po* said: 'What proof do the people of Tibet have that I am dead?' The disciples replied: 'All the Tibetans say: 'A few generations have elapsed since the *grub thob chen po* was seen last, and even a *grub thob* would have died [in the meantime].' They do not think you are alive.' The *grub thob chen po* exclaimed: 'I am not a type of yogi who did not attain the freedom to die after becoming old. There are many prophecies regarding my life span but none about one life span in particular. Those who wish I were dead can believe I am dead. Those who do not wish I were dead can believe I am not dead. Those who wish to see me should come to meet me. I shall come out of [my] seclusion door (*sbug sgo*).'"[21] These statements show well enough that some hidden plan was unfolding at the time.

The *Myang 'das* biography adds:

"The *grub thob chen po* said: 'My bones (perhaps his embalmed body?) should be put in the posture of royal ease. An earthen reliquary *mchod rten* (*sa 'i bum sku*) will do. In the daily routine do as if I were alive; give orders to the gods, ghosts and humans, and continue to perform virtuous deeds. If you do not wish to be different from me, do not do anything contrary to my [teachings]. If you wish that everything you do is for the benefit of others, abandon self-attachment. If you wish to attain Buddhahood, swiftly uproot [any] wavering of the mind. Do not indulge in negligent idleness, but follow the example of the *bla ma*. I appoint Nyi ma bzang po (Thang stong rgyal po's own son) as my successor.[22] Work for sentient beings indiscriminately and think only of the teachings. Do not care for women and wine. Learn practical skills and farming. [If you do so], knowledge spontaneously arises like water sprouting into a meadow. Taking this oath makes you not different from me. Whatever thought arises, let it surface spontaneously. If you cannot follow these instructions, you should ride a blue mare towards the end of

20. *Gsal ba 'i sgron me*, p. 394:5-395:6; see also a shorter version in *Kun gsal nor bu 'i me long*, p. 310:15, even though it lacks dates.

21. *Gsal ba 'i sgron me*, p. 477:3.

22. Thang stong rgyal po seemingly had more than one consort, for several sons are mentioned in different sources. The *Kun gsal nor bu 'i me long* (p. 191) says: "His son Nyi ma bzang po was born in the Fire Dragon year (1436) amidst a great many auspicious signs in the solitary cave to the left of Thar pa gling." The *Gsal ba 'i sgron me* (p. 354:1)

your life.[23] Do what I told [you]. Whatever you practise, Buddha had some teachings for every kind of obscuratism. No teachings should be discriminated into good and bad. [Always] use a straightforward approach.*sNang tsam stong pa lags so/ stong tsam na snang ba yin pa'i don chen po 'phral grub//*.[24] This is the good aspiration of the wandering [yogin] Thang stong rgyal po. You should be able to keep my death secret at the most for 100 years, otherwise for an average of 50 or 60 years, or else for a minimum of 30 years. This is very important.'"[25]

This excerpt is remarkably explicit and reminds us of the circumstances surrounding the "death" of the 5th Dalai Lama.

The *Myang 'das rnam thar* further writes:

"Then we sought blessings from [Thang stong rgyal po's] wish-fulfilling mortal remains and made offerings. Following the instructions of the *grub thob chen po* regarding his passing, Bstan 'dzin Rin po che and I myself, his main disciple (Shes rab dpal ldan), kept the news of his death secret from the gods, ghosts and humans, fearing that the distant disciples and patrons would be grief-stricken. For the sake of preventing aggression by the Mongol border troops and keeping the status quo of the followers at the borders and in central regions, Bstan 'dzin rin po che and his main disciple (La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan) kept it secret to all the gods, ghosts and humans, and made in a way as if Thang stong rgyal po was alive. Receptacles of the body, speech and mind were made, geomantic spots were restored and negatives forces were subdued, conquering the three worlds. Blessings contained in his authoritative messages as customary were sent out for the benefit of sentient beings inside and outside [Tibet]. As a result, the clairvoyance and miracolous power of the *grub chen*'s own compassion manifested in Bstan 'dzin Rin po che and the main disciple (Shes rab dpal ldan) spontaneously."[26]

On the reasons to keep his death secret

The *Myang 'das* biography continues:

"Indeed Bstan 'dzin Rin po che went to train disciples and collect offerings throughout the country for thirty-two years. The main disciple Shes rab dpal ldan acted as if he was (*tshab*) the *grub thob chen po.* There are great accounts of the way those two encouraged virtuous activities continuously. During this period there were good harvests, timely rain, auspiciousness and happiness everywhere. There was no trouble [caused] by the Mongols and other people from the frontiers. Both the religious and secular law flourished in accordance with the teachings in a way that the mind cannot conceive. Thirty-two years elapsed and owing to the ups and downs of the teachings, some people said it was better to reveal that the *grub chen* was no more. They opened the reliquary and enshrined the body in a silver-made *myang 'das* with a gilt copper rain-roof placed in the upper floor of the [the *bla ma*'s] residence with a sixteen pillar courtryard [surrounded] by an external and internal processional path in front of a two-pillar inner sanctum (*gtsang khang*).[27]

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adds about him: "On *lo gsar* of the Dragon Year (1448), it was announced that Nyi ma bzang po [was chosen as] his successor." The same biography (ibid. p. 337) states that he had other sons, namely Byams pa snyan grags, Don grub bzang po and Skyob pa bzang po.

The *Gsal ba'i sgron me* (p.386) enumerates them as follows: "His successors in the parternal side of his lineage ... [were] Sangs rgyas dbon chen Byams pa snyan grags, Sangs rgyas dbon chen Don drub bzang po, Sangs rgyas dbon chen Rin chen mdzes pa'i dpal, Sangs rgyas dbon po Chos bzang, Sangs rgyas dbon po Nor bu and others."

It seems that he had seven sons or nephews (*dbon po*?), including dbon po Chos skyong bzang po (ibid. p. 394). Moreover, the Rta mchog Chos rje of Bhutan regarded himself as a descendant of Thang stong rgyal po.

23. The implications of this passage escape my understanding.

24. The implications of these passages again escape my understanding.

25. *Myang 'das rnam thar*, 163ba2, *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, p. 341:10-342:15.

26. Ibid., 165na2-165na5.

27. See the Earth Dog 1898 description of his *gdung rten* by La dwags Ri rdzong sras sprul Blo bzang tshul khrims chos 'phel in *Snyan rtsom bdud rtsi'i zegs ma; La dwags Pandita Ri rdzong Sras psrul blo bzang tshul khrims chos 'phel gyi gsung thor bu sna tshogs dang ri mo phyogs bsgrigs,* (Edited by Dge thub bstan chos grags) Vol.1, Yashodhara

Pilgrims and devotees from all over the country seek its blessings even today."[28]

The issue of keeping the death of Thang stong rgyal po secret is dealt with in Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's *Bso rig sman gyi khog 'bugs*.[29] He first briefly introduces the interaction between La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan and his teacher: "When he was twenty-six years old, [La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan] went to see the lord of attainments Thang stong rgyal po. The instant he saw him, he was transfixed by extraordinary blessings. He was his attendant for sixteen years. Since he received complete instructions [from grub thob Lcags zam pa] and practised them, he became his main spiritual son."[30]

The same passage then gets into the heart of the matter, for it says: "After grub dbang [Thang stong rgyal po] transferred himself to a paradise, given that his [death] was kept secret for thirty-two years, [La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan] substituted him as if he was no different from him, and thus innumerable benefits occurred to sentient beings."[31]

The reasons for keeping the death of Thang stong rgyal po secret are evident from what is mentioned above. The practice of keeping the death of *bla ma*s and rulers secret was popular in Tibet in antiquity. For example, oral accounts say that the deaths of emperors and also of the great minister mGar were kept secret from the Chinese. In later times, the passing of the 5th Dalai Lama was kept hidden for fourteen years,[32] while that of 'Brug pa zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal was concealed for nearly fifty-seven years.[33]

The *Myang 'das rnam thar* offers enough proof that Thang stong rgyal po's son Bstan 'dzin Nyi ma bzang po and his direct disciple La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan kept his death secret. But it is interesting to note that, for thirty-two years, La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan acted as though he himself was Thang stong rgyal po. I understand that the artifice was successfully worked out, because La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan was from the same region as the *grub thob chen po*, which meant that they spoke the same dialect and perhaps even had similar facial features.

Immortality

Grub thob Rinpoche is regarded and respected as someone who attained freedom from birth and death, a great being who achieved immortality. An old Tibetan saying recites:

"Grub thob Thang stong rgyal po stayed in the mother's womb for sixty years and, when he was finally born, he had white hair and a white beard and goatee; his forehead and face were full of wrinkles."[34] This unusual feature is somewhat confirmed by the reference in *Gsal ba'i sgron me* to the fact that Thang stong rgyal po remained in his mother's womb for 12 months.[35]

Other biographies had to omit the death date of Thang stong rgyal po. The case of the *rnam thar* of the *grub thob chen po* by his direct disciple La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan is meaningful. He does not say

Publications, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 151-154. In autumn 1967, fearing that this mummy may be damaged by the Chinese, a monk named Chu ba Bsod nams, accompanied by three others, moved it to a safe and secret site. However, the Chinese authorities discovered their attempt and they were forced to hand it over to them. On that day, these monks were tried in a struggle session in front of an assembly of 200 people and finally the stupa was thrown into the Yar lung river. See the account published in *Bod kyi dus bab*, Dharamsala, 20 March 2000, p. 5.

28. *Myang 'das rnam thar*, p. 166na1-166na6.
29. Also mentioned in Cyrus Stearns, 1980 n. 49.
30. Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Ziling, 1982, p. 324:4-8.
31. Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Ziling, 1982, p. 324:8-10.
32. Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Pad dkar 'dzin pa ngur smrig gar rol lnga pa drug par 'phos pa'i gtam rna ba'i bcud len*; W.D. Shakabpa, *Political History of Tibet*, (Tibetan Version) Vol. 1, Shakabpa House, Kalimpong, 1976, p. 457-487. On the issue of keeping his death secret for a long time see also the rare *Rdo rje 'dzin pa che mchog 'dus pa rtsal gyi rnam par thar pa las 'phros pa'i byung ba brjod pa gdung ba'i mun sel*, by Rig pa 'dzin pa bZhad pa'i rdo rje, written in 1735, which is going to be published by the Amnye Machen Institute.
33. See Micheal Aris, *Bhutan, The Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom*, Aris & Philips, Warminster, 1979, p. 233-254.
34. *Gzhis ka rtse, Yul srol goms 'dris*, Gzhis ka rtse'i brnyan deb rtsom sgrig u yon lhan tshogs, 1993, p. 38.
35. *Rnam thar Gsal ba'i sgron me*, p. 87:1. When a Tibetan sees an old man with long white hair, long white beard and goatee, he says: "He looks like Grub thob Thang stong rgyal po!"

anything about his passing, but restrains himself to a reference to the Male Wood Dragon year (1484), the year before the secret was revealed, this being the last date appearing in the biography. Is this a sign that he aimed to attribute immortality to his teacher or was it because the life of La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan himself was coming to an end?

The only hint in the biography by his direct disciples Dkon mchog dpal bzang and Bde ba bzang po to the death of Thang stong rgyal po is a passage in which some of his followers and patrons asked whether the *grub thob chen po* had died.

The *Phyi ma las mya ngan las 'das pa'i skor* and the biography by Lo chen 'Gyur med bde chen say respectively that the *grub thob chen po* died at the age of 125 and 128. Their reckoning of the period in which the death of the master was kept secret covered the years from 1485 until 1517, when he would been 157 or 160 years old. According to his main disciple La stod byang pa Shes rab dpal ldan, who acted as if he was the *grub thob chen po*, he was born in 1361 and died in 1485, and that thirty-two years should be added to the latter date, which would make Thang stong rgyal po live until the age of 157 or 160.

Is this the reason for the fideistic acceptance of his abnormally long life in the view of the Tibetan people in general and, in particular, of the devout practitioners with pure vision?

As late as in the present century the *Rnying ma'i chos 'byung* by Bdud 'joms rin po che (1961) states:

"Though he naturally was a great lord of realisations, he expressly received teachings from over 500 teachers,"[36] and adds further:

"Finally at the age of 125, when he actually went to heaven, his son Nyi ma bzang po (sic: La stod pa Shes rab dpal ldan was the person who actually did so) prayed, Thang stong rgyal po returned [from death] and left his extensive spiritual will. He died at Dpal Ri bo che. Mnga' ris Grub chen Tshul khrims bzang po, who lived for 130 years and finally dissolved his body into an immense light formation, and Grub thob Phyar thul can in Eastern Tibet, seem to have been manifestations of the *grub chen*. His wisdom body (*ye shes kyi sku*) has guided many people with good *karma* (*las can*) [and this continues] even at present. Many disciples existed. Owing to the *grub chen* attaining immortality, innumerable disciples who were his lineage holders obtained the power of long life (*tshe'i dgnos grub*). The profound teachings of the Thang stong Oral Transmission still exist, and the tradition of longevity is practised by both the old and new schools."[37]

Thang stong rgyal po received teachings from various masters in India, Java, the Kathmandu Valley and other lands, who had achieved immortality through yogic practice.

For instance, the *Kun gsal me long* says:

"The Tibetan yogi [Thang stong rgyal po] went to India and, at a place called g-Ya ri sgo lnga, at the border between India and Nepali, met a great scholar who had achieved immortality and was a disciple of Mi tra dzo ki. Upon their getting together [he] prophesied: 'Your activity will be extensive in the future.'"[38]

It further says:

"[Thang stong rgyal po] went to Nalanda and met Siddha A ti ka ra who was 230 years old."[39]

And it adds:

"At gSang ba rdo rje phug, near Bodh Gaya, he met Skal ldan rdo rje grags pa, a *grub thob* of gSang sngags rnying ma,"

and concludes: "I, Skal ldan rdo rje grags pa, am 320 years old. I have given 700 empowerments from the [time of the] opening of the door of the teachings until now."[40]

It thus ensues that, like the *grub thob chen po*, the masters from whom Thang stong rgyal po sought to receive teachings had also achieved immortality.

The *Rnam thar ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* says: "He went to Lhar (sic) gdong and met blon po bSod nams mchog who offered him a crystal rosary with 100 beads. He told [Thang stong rgyal po] that there were some

36. *Gsang chen sgna 'gyur rnying ma'i chos 'byung lha dbang g.yul rgyal*, f.290na4.
37. Ibid., f. 290na2.
38. *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long*, p. 52:6.
39. Ibid., p. 56:6.
40. Ibid., p. 60:4.

obstaclés to the fact that he could have a long life and recommended he should have a retreat. Bla ma Kun spangs pa said: 'You can live 100 years. If you can do that, even your monk successors shall have the conditions of living a long life.'"[41]

Such statements by disciples stem from their devotion, respect and belief in their *bla ma*. They are meant to inspire others to set on the path of liberation and obtain a higher rebirth.

The erudite scholars and *grub thob*-s of ancient Tibet, when they wrote the biographies of *grub thob*-s, renunciates, yogis and those who have overcome illusion, go beyond the comprehension of commoners. There is evidence that mere calculations of birth and death dates are liable to open reprimand. For example, the 5th Dalai Lama rebuked Dpa' 'o gtsug lag phreng ba for his analytical assessment of the dates of Guru Rinpoche's arrival and sojourn in Tibet.[42] Brag sgo Rab 'byams's questioning of the authenticity of *Rnam thar Bka' thang*, the biography of Guru Padma 'byung gnas, was refuted by Rtse le sna tshogs Rang grol[43] and the 5th Dalai Lama. These cases are an indication of the general attitude and acceptance of the use of dates.

Many manifestations

The *Kun gsal nor bu'i me long* says:

"Tai Situ Lha btsan skyabs extended to the *grub thob chen po* himself a splendid welcome at Shel dkar Zam sna'i Gur. One [of Thang stong rgyal po's] manifestations lived at Shri Rgod tshang; another manifestation headed the fasting gatherings in front of the sKyid grong Jo bo; one more manifestation led the recitation of *Mani* in the land of Snye shangs; another manifestation meditated on Clear Light at the upper residence of Dpal Chu bo ri; a further manifestation stayed in front of the Lha sa Jo bo; another manifestation did the *Tshes bcu* rites at Zab bu lung; one manifestation lived in Kong po; another manifestation gave instructions on building an iron bridge at Stod lung; one more manifestation lived at Sa skya. All turned the wheel of the teachings for the benefit of the sentient beings."[44]

The reason or significance of Thang stong rgyal po showing many manifestations at the same time and his attainment of the above-mentioned immortality is explained in the *Kun gsal sgron me*:

"'Ho! *Grub thob chen po*! Why is it that we see different sights [of you]?' The *grub thob chen po* replied: 'To control *rlung sems*, to control *rang snang*, and to subdue *gzhan snang*, various miraculous physical forms should be shown to tame the beings of the three realms according to the various kinds of their faith.'"[45]

The *Gsal ba'i sgron me* has Thang stong rgyal po saying:

"I have worked for the benefit of sentient beings in 100,000 rebirths. In this birth I have established a good *karma* with the people of *Lho 'Dzam bu gling*. I have travelled across all the countries twenty-eight times. I have founded Dpal ldan Ri bo che, the holy site prophesied by the three jewels. With a view of an interdependent nexus to benefit the beings of *Lho 'Dzam bu gling*, I sat on the same couch without moving for twenty-three years. I spent fourteen years without speaking."[46]

Generally, people such as the renunciates, yogis, *grub thob*-s and tantric practitioners of Tibet, having cut the chain of attachment, are way beyond the views, thoughts and manners of ordinary beings. Ordinary perceptions, such as the place of birth, names of parents and relatives, dates of birth and death, or the duration of one's life, are mere gossip influenced by ordinary worldly behaviour and habits. This is why various

41. *Ngo mtshar brgya mtsho*, p. 451:1-451:2.

42. *Za hor gyi ban de Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'dir snang 'khrul pa'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa Du ku'u la'i gos bzang las glegs bam gnyis pa bzhugs*, 'Bras spungs dga' ldan pho brang spar ma, f. 137ba2-139na5; *U rgyan ghu ru Pad ma 'byung gnas kyi skyes rabs rnam par thar pa rgyas par bkod pa Pad ma bka'i thang yig ces bya ba bzhugs*, Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling edition, f. 223ba3-224ba1.

43. See *Slob dpon rin po che Pad ma'i rnam thar chen mo las brtsams te dri ba'i lan nges don gsal byed* in the *Collected Works* (gsung 'bum) *of Rtse le sna tshogs rang grol*, Vol. No. 3, Sanje Dorji, New Delhi, 1974, pp. 271:1-343:4.

44. Ibid., p. 270.

45. *Kun gsal sgron me*, f. 146na6-146ba2.

46. *Gsal ba'i sgron me*, p. 441:1.

appellatives such as Smyon pa brtson 'grus,[47] Lung stong smyon pa,[48] Rkyen gang byung ro snyom po,[49] Zas gang byung bcud len po[50] and 'Khrul zhig bya bral chos rje[51] have been used for the *grub thob chen po.*

Hence, it is traditional for the male and female *grub thob*-s and renunciates of Tibet to ignore their age and mundane accounts, and leave them untold.

For example, the autobiography of Dza sprul Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu (Rdza rong phu edition) says:

"[In 1885] a *yogini* from the Mdo smad region, though the inner nature could hardly be detected, her external behaviour was that of giving up ordinary meals for the whole of her life and living on a meagre consumption of azalea (*balu*) and hot water with milk. She was a yogini who could stay upright day and night for an entire year in stone caves and shelters with an opening of about four *mtho* (i.e. the distance from the thumb to the middle finger). She gave prophesies, and all kinds of people, high and low, monks and laymen, in upper and lower Dbus gtsang, treated her as the jewel of the crown. She was believed to be the embodiment of Arya Tara. She was called Chu bzang rje btsun sku zhabs (d. 1921), in the lands of Dbus gtsang, and Ani Khams mo in La stod. She arrived at Rdza rong after offering prostrations at La phyi. She stayed in a cave in Gling smad. As soon as I reached there, she devoutly welcomed me with incense and said: 'Sprul sku Rinpoche, you are going to be [someone] who will make the teachings shine.' I asked her about her birth place, her practice and the *bla ma*-s from whom she had received teachings. She replied: 'I am a beggar from Khams who is on pilgrimage. I have never had a *bla ma* and have not practised the teachings even for a moment. Except for *Sgrol ma* and *Mani,* I know nothing.'"[52]

I feel that such a tradition exists with not only with the male and female Buddhist *grub thob*-s of Tibet but also among those of Hindu yogis and Sufis.The *Kun gsal sgron me* adds:

"Three Khams pa monks from Byang Stag lung came to see the *grub thob chen po.* One Khams [pa] monk saw the *grub thob chen po* as a youth, about twenty-five years old, handsome like the son of the gods. One Khams [pa] monk saw the *grub thob chen po* as a middle-aged man, with an imposing figure, about 40 years old and with a great radiance. One Khams [pa] monk saw the *grub thob chen po* as an aged person, with white hair, a bent back and using a walking stick. The three monks, having returned to Byang Stag lung monastery, spoke about what they saw. A 70-year old man said: 'It is true that the *grub thob chen po* is old. I am 70 years of age. When I was seventeen years old, the *grub thob chen po* was already old. Now that I have aged that much, the *grub thob chen po* cannot be a youth aged twenty or thirty years.' The other *Dge bshes*-s said: 'The *grub thob chen po* Lcags zam pa is known as an incarnation of O rgyan Padma 'byung gnas. Padma 'byung gnas lives in O rgyan, the land in the south-west. It is said that he shows himself to the demons as a young, middle aged and old man, but he is one and the same [person]. So all three of you are right.'"[53]

Similarly, Shug gseb A ni Lo chen, a woman who was the lord of attainments and lived about fifty years ago, is believed to have lived for ninety-eight years by Hor khang Bsod nams dpal 'bar;[54] about 100 years by Khu nu Mthar phyin Bābu[55] and by Mkhas btsun bzang po Rinpoche;[56] 113 years by Lha lung pa Blo bzang Phun tshogs;[57] and 130 years by Phreng ring Lha lcam.[58] Her actual life span was eighty-six or eighty-

47. *Thang rgyal rnam thar* p. 34:15.

48. *Thang rgyal rnam thar,* p. 74:15; *Gsal ba'i sgron me,* p. 118:3; 406:2 and p. 494:2.

49. *Thang rgyal rnam thar,* p. 74:19; *Ggsal ba'i sgron me,* p. 406:2 and p. 494:2.

50. *Gsal ba'i sgron me,* p. 119:1.

51. *Gsal ba'i sgron me,* p. 119:3.

52. Rdza rong phu edition f.79ba6.

53. *Rnam thar Kun gsal sgron me,* f. 132na5; see also *Thang rgyal rnam thar,* p. 312:5.

54. *Shug gseb rje btsun rin po che Rig 'dzin Chos dbyings bzang mo'i rnam thar mdor bsdus,* Bod ljongs zhib 'jug, 1989 (1) p. 132:23.

55. *Yul phyogs so so'i gsar 'gyur me long* (The Tibet Mirror), 1 September 1951, front page, *Mi rtag 'chi ba'i dran bskul.*

56. Mkhas btsun bzang po, *Snga 'gyur rnying ma ba'i bla ma brgyud pa rjes 'brangs dang bcas pa'i rnam thar ngo mtshar rgya mtsho'i smad cha,* LTWA, Dharamsala, 1973, p. 530:6.

57. *Tibet The Sacred Realm*; photographs 1880-1950, New York, Aperture Inc., 1983, p. 33.

58. *Daughter of Tibet,* John Murray, 1970, p. 167; see also Tsultrim Allione, *Women of Wisdom,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1984; Hanna Havenevik, *Tibetan Buddhist Nuns,* Norwegian University Press, 1989, pp. 76-78, and

seven years, her dates being 1865-1951. But her disciples, patrons and further disciples like to think she lived until a remarkably old age, and truly hold this belief.

The editors and publisher of the 1949 autobiography of Shug gseb Ani Lo chen state: "This short biography of her is up to the Earth Ox year (1949). The account of her reaching 100 years of age remains to be added hereafter. This is all for now."[59]

The entry year of her birth, originally given as Wood Rat (1864), was erased and changed into Water Rat (1852) in the 1975 edition of the autobiography of Shug gseb Ani Lo chen, entitled *Rnam mkhyen bde ster* and published in 1975 by her direct disciples, the scholarly couple,[60] to make this event happen earlier, so that her life span was extended to over 100 years of age.

The autobiography of Shug gseb Ani Lo chen further says:

"The regent Rwa greng Rin po che (r. 1934-1940) arrived here on his pilgrimage to the south. My disciples and the aristocrats told [me] to go and visit the regent as a sign of respect for him. They were ready to carry me on their back, but the *Rinpoche* regent came alone to see me. He asked me: 'How long is it since you came here? How old are you now?' I replied: 'When I came here, my mouth was full of teeth and my hair was black. Now I have no teeth and my head is white.'"[61]

Thus she thought there was no need to disclose her age. Such an attitude is still widely practised, and there is no reason to believe that it will not be common in the future.

Appendix

Appointment of his son as successor: whether or not the Lcags zam incarnations are *ma 'das sprul sku*

Soon after the *Sku 'bum mchod rten* of Ri bo che was completed in the Fire Male Mouse Year (1456), the *Kun gsal me long* says: "His son Nyi ma bzang po was appointed to be his successor."[62]

It further says: "At that time, Thang stong rgyal po was surrounded by a great number of people belonging to different races, who had assembled to listen to his discourses. On one such occasion he said: "I have a great number of holy objects, bridges and ferries. It is important to have someone who can look after them. I have consulted gods, ghosts and humans. Disciples from Mon and Kong po have suggested that I should appoint a member of [my] clan. Some have suggested that I should appoint a disciple. The Sne pa family from Lha sa has suggested that I should appoint both a member of [my] clan and a greatly knowledgeable disciple. The divination conducted in front of the Jo bo Shakya muni suggested that it is best to appoint a descendant from my clan. Therefore I have now appointed Btsun pa Nyi ma bzang po to be my successor. Therefore you all should bear this in mind."[63]

This biography says that the appointment of his successor took place in 1456. In the closing pages, the same *rnam thar* has a controversial statement because it records that he lived for 125 years and appointed his successor just before his death in the Wood Snake year (1484).

I believe that the appointment of his successor took place in 1456, and thus well before his passing. It was not done in the manner of disciples requesting the teacher to be reborn swiftly.

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her Ph.D. thesis on Shug seb Lo chen; *The story of a Tibetan Yogini, Shugsep Jetsun, (1852-1953),* prepared by Kim Yeshe & Acharya [Ven.] Tashi Tsering with assistance of Sallie Davenport & Dorjey Tseten, Choyang, The Voice of Tibetan Religion and Culture, Year of Tibet Edition, 1991, pp.130-143; Janice D. Willis, *Tibetan Ani-s: The Nuns' Life in Tibet,* The Tibet Journal, LTWA, Dharamsala, 1984, Vol. IX, no. IV, pp. 20-23; and L.P.Lhalungpa's interview in Parobola, Vol. III, no. 4, November, 1978, p. 49.

59. *Gangs shug ma Ni lo chen rig 'dzin Chos nyid bzang mo'i rnam par thar pa rnam mkhyen bde ster*, p. 557:5.

60. *Gangs shug ma Ni lo chen rig 'dzin Chos nyid bzang mo'i rnam par thar pa rnam mkhyen bde ster*, published by Kazi Sonam Tobgye, Snga 'gyur rnying ma'i gsung rabs Series, Volume 22, Gangtok, 1975.

61. Ibid., pp. 450:4-451:1.

62. Ibid., p. 284:8.

63. Ibid., pp. 333:14-334:5.

Of course many emanations (*rnam 'phrul/sprul*) of Thang stong rgyal po existed after he died. However it does not seem that there was a line of successive incarnations which could be neatly listed in chronological sequence.

One should add that the line of reincarnation called the Lcags zam sprul sku or Bstan 'dzin chos rje of the Lcags zam Chu bo ri monastery is not the direct incarnation lineage of Thang stong rgyal po, but that of Bstan 'dzin nyi ma bzang po, the son he appointed to be his successor. Today the latter reincarnation line is regarded as the one of Thang stong rgyal po. When it discusses this lineage of the Lcags zam sprul sku, the 13th Dalai Lama's biography indeed defines it as "the reincarnation [line] of Grub thob Thang stong rgyal po."[64]

Should it be considered an authentic tradition, then one can say that this perhaps is one of the earliest cases of "*ma 'das sprul sku,*" i.e. an incarnation born before the previous one died.

As has been said above, Thang stong rgyal po's son Bstan 'dzin Nyi ma bzang po was born in 1436 and died at the age of seventy-three.[65] From him to the present day, there has been a line of eleven successive incarnations. The present one, bShad sgrub Bstan 'dzin chos 'phags, was born in 1974 in Bhutan, where he lives.[66]

The first in the line of Bstan 'dzin Nyi ma bzang po's incarnations was an ordained monk. All the biographies of Thang stong rgyal po speak of him as "the monk" (*btsun pa*) Nyi ma bzang po. He is depicted in a *thang ka* in the possesson of the present incarnation in Bhutan. He is depicted with monk's robes, wearing a *pan zhwa* hat, with the right hand in the threatening gesture, and also displaying an iron chain.

64. *'Phags pa 'jig rten dbang phyug gi rnam sprul rim byon gyi 'khrungs rabs deb ther nor bu'i phreng ba,* deb lnga pa, Varanasi Legs bshas dpe mdzod khang, 1978, p. 508:3.

65. *Bod kyi gal che'i lo rgyus yig tshang bdams bsgrigs*, Gangs can rig mdzod No. 16, Bod ljongs Bod yig dpe rnying dpe khrun khang, 1991, p. 294:20.

66. Tibetan government documents and the Lcags zam Chu bo ri monastery refer to the *dgon pa* as "Lcags zam Chu bo ri ban gtsang 'dus sde," "the assembly of the pure *ban* [*dhe*] ("monks") of Lcags zam Chu bo ri." Even the title of their *Chos spyod* reads: "Lcags zam ban gtsang 'dus sde'i zhal 'don thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam gyi 'jug mgo chos spyod kyi rim pa gser gyi phreng ba," which means that all the residents of this monastery should be celibate monks. However, the followers of the Lcags zam school are mostly *Ser khyim pa* ("married lay practitioners").

THE NAMES OF 'GOS LO TSĀ BA GZHON NU DPAL (1392-1481)*

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> Gene's passion for Tibetan history has been, I daresay, contagious to many of us, and I take a keenly felt delight in penning these few lines as a formal "thank you" for his proverbial kindness and generosity, and *en homage* to his inestimable contributions to the field of Tibetan Studies. Were it not for his timely vision of how best to preserve the enormous legacy of Tibetan letters from the late 1960s onward and his continuing untiring efforts to bring this about through his foundation of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, Inc., New York, NY [tbrc.org], I think it safe to say that I and others would most probably not be doing what we are doing now. Dank ye wel, Gene!

The scholar monk 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal was part of a group of intellectual luminaries that dominated the scholarly scene of the Central Tibetan area of Dbus during the fifteenth century. Spanning eleven years short of a hundred, his long life formed the subject of a substantial, if at times uneven, retrospective biography his disciple Zhwa dmar IV Chos kyi grags pa ye shes dpal bzang po (1453-1524) completed on 5 May, 1517 at his new see of Yangs pa can. He does not say way, it seems suddenly and out of the blue, he felt compelled to write it so long after the master's passing, nor does he make mention of anyone having requested him to do so. This lack of any explicit background information on the circumstances that surround its composition stands in some contrast to his much more detailed study of the life of Khrims khang Lo tsā ba Bsod nams rgya mtsho'i sde (1424-82), another one of his teachers, who probably died on 19 September, 1482. According to its colophon, Zhwa dmar IV began to compile his narrative at the behest of Dpal bzhi 'dzom Rin chen don yod alias Bsod nams ye shes bzang po of the ruling family of Yar rgyab – this nobleman, the grandson of the powerful Drung chen Bzhi 'dzom pa (1372-1446), had accompanied his request with a so-called "golden flower" (*gser gyi me tog*) incentive –, immediately upon the conclusion of the funerary rituals held in honor of the deceased by first arranging in chronological order the notes on his life that another disciple of his, by the name of Byams pa kun dga', had made earlier. He started his project on 25 October of that same year, and was able to complete most of it at his earlier see of Lhun grub lha rtse, a hermitage nestled in the lower part (*mda'*) of Dol, the small valley that spills into the large Grwa thang plain. Exactly one month later, on 25 November, he put the finishing touches on it, all the while with Byams pa kun dga' at his side as his amanuensis. A blockprint of an edition in one hundred and seventeen folios from the printing blocks houses at his later see of Yangs pa can monastery, now utterly laid waste, has yet to be located.

In the concluding remarks of his study of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's life, Zhwa dmar IV acknowledges his debt to an earlier biography by Smon lam grags pa, another disciple of 'Gos Lo tsā ba, who occasionally functioned as his master's amanuensis, which has not surfaced so far, and writes that a certain Ratnamangala (= Rin chen bkra shis) was the scribe for this work. A good reason for its composition is of course that 'Gos Lo tsā ba had functioned as abbot during his final ordination as a monk in the first half of 1478. But this still does not really explain the thirty-five year hiatus between his death and the composition of the biography. It is thus more than probable that the existence of Smon lam grags pa's earlier work had as much to do with his delay as it had with Zhwa dmar IV reflecting on and taking stock of his own life as it was drawing to its inexorable end. As they stand, both biographies read like a who-is-who in the business of religion and politics of the era and region and, though by no means unique, they form enormously important sources for our understanding of this period.

Widely sought after as a Sanskritist-translator (*lo tsā ba*) and recognized as an impartial master of things religious, 'Gos Lo tsā ba was also the author of a considerable body of interpretive work, ranging from numerous commentaries on Indian Buddhist texts to treatises on Buddhist philosophy, computational astronomy and perhaps also Sanskrit grammar. Several of these were printed in his lifetime. Among them are his 1442-3 **Bstan rtsis 'khrul sel,* a work on computational astronomy and religious chronology (*bstan*

rtsis), for which blocks were carved before 1468, and his 1467 refutation of Red mda' pa Gzhon nu blo gros' (1349-1413) aspersions on the authenticity of the *Laghukālacakratantra*, titled *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsod lan gdung sel ku ma da'i dga' ston*. The latter is the nineteen-folio print that was financially subvented by Rin chen chos kyi rgyal po of the Yab rgyab family. He was of course Gran-Governor (*dpon chen*) Rin chen bzang po (?-1475/6) or Rin chen chos rgyal dpal bzang po, the father of Rin chen don yod. Though the blocks may not have been carved during his life, a print of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's huge 1473 exegesis of the *Uttaratantra* was filmed by the N.G.M.P.P. and Dr. Kl.-D. Mathes, its director from 1993 to 2001, has completed an as yet unpublished study of it. But 'Gos Lo tsā ba especially gained posthumous fame for his *Deb gter* (or: *ther*) *sngon po*, a Leviathan-like study of major and minor Buddhist traditions in Tibet and their Indian (including Kashmirian) and/or Nepalese antecedents, he may have compiled from 1476 to 1478. Indeed, it is as a premier historian that, not unlike Gene himself, his name has become a household word among Tibetans and Tibetanists, ever since it was blockprinted and its English and Chinese translations were published. The former translation by G. Roerich and his learned Tibetan friend and informant Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1903/5-51) was first published in Calcutta, in 1949, and was subsequently reprinted several times; the latter, by Guo Heqing, was only published as recent as 1985.

'Gos Lo tsā ba is known under some three other names: "Spob bdar," "Rtsed thang Lo tsā ba" – *rtsed* is occasionally spelled *rtses*, which may be acceptable, but the other spellings *rtse* and *dang* for *thang*, though equally homophonous and not infrequent in the literature, are incorrect –, and "Yid bzang rtse pa" or "Yid bzang rtse pa the Former (*snga ma*)." The first of these three eponyms is first and, so far, only noted by Gser mdog Paṇ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428-1507) in his 1474 biography of his master Rong ston Shākya rgyal mtshan (1367-1449). I am not sure why, as he says, Lo chen 'Gos Lo tsā ba was known (*grags*) under this name or term whose meaning frankly escape me in its entirety. Elsewhere, for example, in his biography of Spyan snga Kun dga' rdo rje (1424-?), the fifth abbot of Rong ston's see of Nalendra, and his 1495 study of the history of religious convocations (*chos* [*kyi*] *'khor* [*lo*]), Gser mdog Paṇ chen uses "Mkhan chen Gzhon nu dpal" or the less ambiguous, for "Gzhon nu dpal" is not altogether an uncommon name in religion, "Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal."

The second sobriquet has its origin in the intimate connections he enjoyed with most of the contemporary ruling elite of the Phag mo gru dynasty. Built by this dynasty's founder Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302-64) in 1351, some forty-one years before he was born, Rtsed thang monastery was located in the immediate vicinity of Sne'u gdong [rtse], the palace and administrative center of Phag mo gru rule. We can assume that to some degree this institution must have come to rival in importance Gdan sa mthil (also: thel) or Phag mo gru, the family's older, "ancestral" monastery, if only because of its closer proximity to the base from which the dynasty projected its political power. Gdan sa mthil (or: thel) was located to their northeast, across the Gtsang po (Brahmaputra) river, in the 'On valley, and was the traditional see of the Spyan snga Rin-po-che-s. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, every one of the Spyan snga hierarchs, with the exception of Zhwa dmar IV, belonged to the ruling family of Sne'u gdong. Rtsed thang, too, must have actively participated in the rituals performed for the beneficence of the dynasty's rule in order to ensure its continuity and success in the face of repeated military conflicts with other Tibetan principalities in Central Tibet, Dbus and Gtsang. With his biography by Zhwa dmar IV in hand, it now turns out that, like many another Central Tibetan prelate, 'Gos Lo tsā ba was so closely connected with this family and its neighboring vassals that he often served in the capacity of what we may call their court chaplain. On account of them having been teachers to a succession of Phag mo gru rulers, he and his colleague and friend Nam mkha' blo gros (1403-77) are also on occasion given the title *ti shri* (< Ch. *dishi*), "Imperial Preceptor." The use of this title has of course profound cultural and political implications, but these cannot be discussed here.

His other nickname, Yid bzang rtse pa or Yid bzang rtse pa the Former, is owed in the first place to his association with Yid bzang rtse. Zhwa dmar IV writes that he left Sne'u gdong for old (*rnying pa*) Yid bzang rtse, where he stayed during the winter of 1441-2 and again in 1446 and in the fall of 1447. Although I am at present not able to locate it with any precision, it may very well have been situated in the neighborhood of Sne'u gdong and Rtsed thang. Perhaps it was even a temple or hermitage attached to the latter. It is for

this reason that the Las chen begins his brief biography of 'Gos Lo tsā ba by calling him as "Yid bzang rtse pa, the *ring lugs* of the Victorious One [= Buddha]." His choice of the term *ring lugs* is hardly accidental and we can be certain that it was a very conscious act on his part. Fully in the know of historical precedent, the title means something in the order of "chief abbot," and was first awarded to Sba Ye shes dbang po by emperor Khri Srong lde btsan (ca. 742-97). Ye shes dbang po was the first Tibetan successor of Śāntarakṣita to the abbacy of Bsam yas, the first Buddhist institution in Tibet to have a contingent of monks. In other words, the Las chen's point in using this phrase was obviously that he considered 'Gos Lo tsā ba to be the rightful successor to the Buddha himself, and that he was so anointed by the powers of the Phag mo gru. His title *las chen* indicates that he was a mid-level official in their employ. Unlike the powers at Sa skya, who had ruled over a unified Central and West Tibet as proxies for the Mongol imperial court in China from *circa* 1264 to the 1350s, his use of the term *ring lugs* suggests furthermore that the Phag mo gru wanted to be perceived and saw themselves as legitimate heirs to the religious legacy and political glory of Tibet's imperial period, when Tibet was an independent and powerful nation-state. Zhwa dmar IV applies the very same *ring lugs* [*chen po*] to Khrims khang Lo tsā ba.

Some authorities like the Las chen refer to him as "Yid bzang rtse pa the Former" in order to distinguish him from one of his disciples, Chag Lo tsā ba III alias Yid bzang rtse pa "the Later" (*phyi ma*). But we must be cautious here, inasmuch as the historian Dpa' bo II employs "Yid bzang rtse pa" for 'Gos Lo tsā ba and "Yid bzang rtse pa the Later" for none other than Zhwa dmar IV. Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis (b. ca. 1500) – one wonders whether he is the same Rin chen bkra shis who was Zhwa dmar IV's scribe for his biography of 'Gos Lo tsā ba – mentions a Yid bzang rtse pa in his 1577 biography of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1528) in connection with a corpora of texts his master had studied in Stag lung monastery in *circa* 1484-5 under its eleventh abbot Ngag gi dbang phyug grags pa (1418-96). The ones he stipulates were written by Yid bzang rtse pa, clearly suggest that we have here to do with 'Gos Lo tsā ba. There is yet an additional reference to Yid bzang rtse pa, in an entry for the year 1488, who must also be identified with him. The biography of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba included by A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597-1659), the great Sa skya pa historian and twenty-eighth abbot of Sa skya monastery, in his 1636 history of the *Kālacakra* precepts, has here exactly the same passage that we find in Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba's work. It details the circumstances under which a Sanskrit manuscript of a *pañjikā*-style commentary on Vasubandhu[I]'s (ca. 320-80) *Abhidharmakośabhāsya* – it has the (?Tibetan) nickname *Gnam lcags thog zer* (**Karakāśani*) – was translated into Tibetan. Attributing it to the Sthiramati of whom some Tibetan sources say that he had been a student of Vasubandhu (I), they write that it had come in the possession of the princely scholar Rnam rgyal grags bzang (1395-1475), and that this Lord of Byang principality (*byang bdag*) had placed it in the hands of Yid bang rtse pa, most probably for having rendered his services as an interpreter when Vanaratna (1384-1468) visited his palace in 1453. At an undisclosed time, Yid bzang rtse pa set about to render it into Tibetan, but ill-health and failing eyes prevented him from finishing it. Later, they write in 1488, Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba was requested by a Spyan snga Rin po che Bdag nyid chen po to carry on with the job of translating this long work. Beginning his work in Lhun grub gling in Dol, he completed it while serving as the Spyan snga's attendant in the southeastern Tibetan area of Kong po.

That this Yid bzang rtse pa can only be 'Gos Lo tsā ba is vouchsafed by two thin passages in his biography, the first of which informs us that, by 1470, he had translated the beginning of Sthiramati's work, subtitled (*Tattvārtha*). Two years later, in 1472, he tried to continue where he had left off – he also planned at this time to translate the *Mañjuṣrīvyākaraṇa* on Sanskrit grammar and to complete what was left to do of the Vajracchedikā exegesis by a Vasubandhu –, but the conditions of his aged eyes were such that he was unable to see the tiny letters (*yi ge phra ba mi gzigs pa*[*s*]) of the manuscripts. This irritated him to no end (*thugs khral yang yang gnang*). Zhwa dmar IV related that he asked for some assistance and that, ultimately, Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba was able to fulfill his intention by finishing his work on these three. The colophon of his translation of the *Tattvārtha* in the canon quite clearly describes the role Zhwa dmar IV had played in its execution, so that we are now in the position to identify the man behing Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba's and A mes zhabs' "Spyan snga Rin po che Bdag nyid chen po" as none other than Zhwa dmar IV. The epithet was of

course informed through the benefit of hindsight, for Zhwa dmar IV occupied the post of the Spyan snga hierarch of Gdan sa mthil from 1493 to his passing. The colophon begins by stating that the existence of this commentary was (?first) signaled by Dpang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342), and that a Sanskrit manuscript had fallen into the hands of 'Gos Lo tsā ba. Because he was unable to complete the translation, Zhwa dmar IV decided to fulfill the intention of his erstwhile master, but wondered whether it could be translated into Tibetan at all. In reply to this query, Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba told him that the manuscript had some lacunae (*hor kong*) which, he was cautiously optimistic, could probably be restored for the most part were he to compare its readings with those of the available corpus of translations of the *Kośa* and the Indian commentaries. Zhwa dmar IV agreed and told him to proceed. Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba compared the actual Sanskrit manuscript (*rgya dpe ngo bo*) – this refers to 'Gos Lo tsā ba's manuscript – with the readings of another manuscript of the text that had come from Stag lung. Called an "Indian [Sanskrit] manuscript which is a witness manuscript" (*dpe dpang gi rgya dpe*), it lacked the text of the final portion of the second, the entire third and the first portion of the fourth chapter. Using its readings as well as of a Sanskrit manuscript of Vasubandhu's *Bhāsya* and the "Tibetan texts [= ?translations of the *Bhāsya* and other Indian commentaries] that had been criticized earlier" (*sngar smod pa'i bod dpe rnams*) to arrive at a workable rendition, he began his task in Lhun grub gling and Lhun grub lha rtse, and finished it in the Dga' ldan ma mo temple of Kong po. Zhwa dmar IV first visited Dga' ldan ma mo at the age of eleven, shortly after his formal recognition as the Zhwa dmar hierarch of the Karma Bka' brgyud pa sect, and became its nominal abbot not long thereafter. This institution had been founded by Zhwa dmar II Dri med ye shes dpal (1350-1405) alias Mkha' spyod dbang po in 1386. Though the canonical recension does not say when Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba completed his task, Dpa' bo II dates it to 1490. The colophon is followed by three addenda, the second of which is a concluding verse of dedication and the third restates the famous *ye dharma...* formula. I plan to return to this work and its transmission in Tibetan scholarly circles on a future occasion.

Bibliographic Abbreviations

DPA' – Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*. Ed. Rdo rje rgyal po. 2 vols. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986.

LAS – Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan. *Bka' gdams kyi rnam par thar pa bka' gdams chos 'byung gsal ba'i sgron ma*, vol. 2. New Delhi, 1972.

SKYOGS – Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis. *Rje btsun zhwa lu lo tsā ba'i rnam par thar pa brjed byang nor bu'i khri shing* [handwritten *dbu med* manuscript], C.P.N. catalogue no. 002790(9),. Fols. 42.

ZHWA – Zhwa dmar IV Chos grags ye shes. *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa mkhan chen thams cad mkhyen pa don gyi slad du mtshan nas smos te gzhon nu dpal gyi rnam par thar pa yon tan rin po che mchog tu rgyas pa'i ljon pa* [handwritten *dbu can* manuscript], C.P.N. catalogue no. 003259(11). Fols. 74.

ZHWA1 – Ibid. *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa lo tsā ba chen po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* [handwritten *dbu can* manuscript], C.P.N. catalogue no. 003265(5). Fols. 130.

Notes

* This paper incorporates some of the results obtained during my stay in Beijing from October to December of 1992 and from July to September of 1993 that was made possible by a generous grant from what was then the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, Washington, D.C. There I mainly worked in the China Nationalities Library of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities. The manuscripts of texts used for this paper that were housed in the latter are marked "C.P.N."; those that were filmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project in Nepal are marked "N.G.M.P.P."

1. See ZHWA. The earliest summary of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's life is so far found in his disciple the Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan's 1494 chronicle of the Bka' gdams pa school in LAS2, 1-10. An edition of ZHWA by Ngag dbang nor bu was recently published as *'Gos lo gzhon nu dpal gyi rnam thar* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004).
2. What follows is taken from ZHWA1, 128a ff. This work is also as yet unpublished. All dates in this paper are calculated with the aid of the *Tabellen* in D. Schuh's *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der tibetischen*

Kalenderrechnung, Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Supplement Bd. 16 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1973).

3. He was also the author of a catalogue of his master's writings and translations, for which see the nine-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript of the *Rje btsun lo tsā ba chen po'i bka' 'bum dang 'gyur 'bum phyogs gcig tu bzhugs pa ji snyed pa'i dkar chag utpa la'i phreng ba*, C.P.N. catalogue no. 004401(1). He occurs once in ZHWA1, 74b. Apparently a native of Sna dkar rtse, we find three letters addressed to Sna dkar rtse Byams pa kun dga' among Khrims khang Lo tsā ba's letters in the *Yongs 'dzin dam pa rnams kyi drung du phul ba'i zhu yig dang / zhal slob sbyin bdag dang bcas pa rnams la chos skyes su stsal ba'i bka' yig phreng ba kun khyab snyan pa'i ba dan*, N.G.M.P.P., Reel no. AT 111/2, 310b-1b. This fascinating epistolary collection was first noted by its discovered F.-K. Ehrhard in his "The Tibetan Section of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) in the Year 1991: Actual Achievements and Future Prospects," *Abhilekh* 10 (1992), 84.
4. A tentative and incomplete listing of his translations and revisions of earlier translations is given in M. Hahn, "Das *Vanaratnastotra* des Āditya*," *Suhṛllekhāḥ. Festgabe für Helmut Eimer*, ed. M. Hahn et al., Indica et Tibetica, Bd. 28 (Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1996), 30-1.
5. If memory serves me well, it is listed among the reels of *tibetica* of texts filmed by the N.G.M.P.P., but I naturally stand to be corrected.
6. I am preparing a facsimile reproduction of the first which, together with a long introduction, will be published by the Lumbini International Research Institute, directed by C. Cueppers. The second work is registered under C.P.N. catalogue no. 006770(1), and was recently reprinted in *Skar nag rtsis kyi lo rgyus skor*, *Bod kyi rtsis rig kun 'dus chen mo*, vol. 1, (Chengdu: Si khrom mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1998), 298-327. This work is alluded to in ZHWA, 36b, 67b.
7. ZHWA, 69b, states that he finished it on the fifteenth day of the eighth month (6 September, 1473), but in his introduction to the *Deb ther sngon po*, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, vol 1 (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), *4, Dung dkar Rin po che maintains that he wrote it in 1468. A handwritten *dbu med* manuscript of this long work was also filmed by the N.G.M.P.P., and the edition will be published in the series *Publications of the Nepal Research Centre*. It is also mentioned in ZHWA, 20a, and 73b.
8. On the same page of his introduction as in note 7, Dung dkar Rin po che states that he completed it towards the end of 1476 on the basis of one or both sources he used for his synopsis of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's life. There are a seventy-three folio biography by his own disciple titled *Thams cad mkhyen pa gzhon nu dpal gyi rnam par thar pa* and Chag Lo tsā ba III Rin chen chos kyi rgyal po's (1447-?) *Dus 'khor chos 'byung dpag bsam snye ma*. Chag Lo tsā ba III was the abbot of Lte'u ra, his own ancestral monastery, and a student of 'Gos Lo tsā ba as well. The first belonged to the holdings of the C.P.N. and is most probably nothing other than the biography by Zhwa dmar IV. However, the second of but two entries in which he expressly mentions the chronicle, ZHWA, 46b and 71b, states that he wrote it in 1478. For the other work, a history of the transmissions of the *Kālacakra*, Dung dkar Rin po che used an unpublished manuscript that belonged to the library of Sa skya monastery's Lha khang chen mo. I have seen a sixteenth century blockprint of Chag Lo tsā ba III's work in the library of the Tibetan Archives, Lhasa. Some Tibetan sources, such as Dngos grub rgya mtsho's early seventeenth century treatise on the study of linguistics in Tibet, call him Chag Lo tsā ba IV; see the *Tha snyad rig gnas lnga ji ltar byung ba'i tshul gsal bar byed pa blo gsal mgrin rgyan legs bshad nor bu'i phreng ba*, ed. Nor brang O rgyan, Gangs can rig mdzod, 4 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987), 309. But this seems to be an oversight, for the Karma Bka' brgyud pa historian Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504-66) consistently refers to him as Chag Lo tsā ba III, for which see DPA'1, 505 and DPA'2, 1501.
9. See, respectively, *The Blue Annals* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979) and *Qingshi* (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1985). For some aspects of this work, see my "On the Composition and Printings of the *Deb gter* [or: *ther*] *sngon po* by 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392-1481)", which is forthcoming in the *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 2 (2006).
10. See the *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa bshes gnyen shākya rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar ngo mtshar dad pa'i rol mtsho*, *Collected Works*, vol 16 (Thimphu, 1975), 336. See also D. P. Jackson's *Introduction to Rong ston on the Prajñāpāramitā Philosophy* of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, ed. D. P. Jackson and Onoda Shunzo, Biblia Tibetica, 2 (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshoso, 1988), VII. ZHWA, 16b, 20a, 52b, makes it quite clear that he studied with Ron ston during the years 1419 and 1424.
11. See his *Chos kyi rje kun dga' rdo rje'i rman par thar pa dad pa'i stobs bskyed pa*, *Collected Works*, vol. 16 (Thimphu, 1975), 413, and the *Chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba'i rnam gzhag ji ltar grub pa'i yi ge gzu bor gnas pa'i mdzangs pa dga' byed*, *Collected Works*, vol. 16 (Thimphu, 1975), 476.

12. For a few notes on this monastery, see my "On the Fifteenth Century *Lho rong chos 'byung* by Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal and Its Importance for Tibetan and Religious History," *Aspects of Tibetan History, Lungta* 14, Spring 2001, ed. R. Vitali (Dharamsala, India: Amnye Machen Institute), 57-76.
13. DPA'2, 1121. Neither the Las chen nor Zhwa dmar IV use this title for him.
14. ZHWA, 33b, 58b, 59b, 60a.
15. LAS2, 1. In LAS2, 502 ff., the Las chen refers to him as Yid bzang rtse pa as the source for his information on several students of Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), with whom he had briefly studied in Bkra shis do kha, in 1415; see ZHWA, 9b-10a.
16. On this expression, see lastly Chen Jianjian [= Bsod nams skyid], "Ring lugs zhes pa'i tha snyad kyi go don 'gyur tshul la rags tsam dpyad pa," *Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Buddhist Studies, Fagernes 1992*, vol. 2, ed. P. Kvaerne (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 781-8, and its Chinese version in *Zhongguo Zangxue* 3 (1991), 134-40.
17. ZHWA1, 130b.
18. LAS2, 10.
19. DPA', 1122-4. DPA'2, 1125 refers to 'Gos Lo tsā ba as *rje 'gos*, "Lord 'Gos."
20. SKYOGS, 21b, where he refers to a series of notes (*zin bris*) the Stag lung hierarch had made of Yid bzang rtse pa's lectures on the *Uttaratantra* and the *Bodhicāryāvatāra*, as well as to Yid bzang rtse pa's commentaries on the *Do ha [b]skor gsum* and the *Dmangs do ha*. ZHWA, 67a, observed that he wrote a study of the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* in 1465 at the behest of the Stag lung hierarch.
21. SKYOGS, 22b. The passage occurs partly in the text proper and partly in a corrective editorial note in the bottom margin, written in small *dbu can* characters. The passage is found "whole" on fol. 27a of another *dbu med* manuscript of the text as per C.P.N. catalogue no. 002772(12).
22. See the *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos 'byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i shing rta* [handwritten *dbu med* manuscript], *Collected Works*, vol. Pa, C.P.N. catalogue no. 003204, 145a. A mes zhabs' biography of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba extends from fols. 126a-70a. At the end, he says that he summarized the earlier study of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba's life by Paṇ chen 'Bum phrag gsum pa, subtitled *Dad pa'i 'jug ngogs*, to which he added further details from Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba's work. Of the *prima facie* three possible Tibetan candidates who are nicknamed "[Paṇ chen] 'Bum phrag gsum pa" – see my "Fourteenth Century Tibetan Cultural History VI: The Transmission of Indian Buddhist *Pramāṇavāda* according to Early Tibetan *Gsan yig*-s," *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* XLIX (1995), 926-7, n. 20 – the one in question is no doubt Paṇ chen Rin chen chos kyi dbang po (16th cent.). SKYOGS, 42a-b states that he was the Chu [= ?Chos] sgo ba of Gdan sa mthil.
23. Writing at the end of 1167 or the beginning of 1168, already the Sa skya pa scholar Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo (1142-82), distinguishes between Vasubandhu as a Gnas brtan (*Sthavira) and Vasubandhu as a Yogācārin in his *Chos la 'jug pa'i sgo, Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum*, vol. 2, comp. Bsod nams rgya mtsho (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968), no. 17, 342/4. He stipulates that Sthiramati was a disciple of the latter. For the two Vasubandhus, see L. Schmithausen, *Ālayavijñāna. On the Origin and the Early Development of a Central Concept of Yogācāra* Philosophy, part 2 (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1987), 262-3, n. 101, and M. Mejor, *Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa and the Commentaries Preserved in the Tanjur*, Alt- und Neu-indische Studien, Bd. 42 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991), 42-9.
24. For this, see the very brief note in 'Gos Lo tsā ba's biography of Vanaratna, the *Mkhas pa chen po dpal nags kyi rin chen gyi rnam par thar pa* (Thimphu: National Library of Bhutan, 1985), 47 [= Khrims khang Lo tsā ba's *Chos kyi rje paṇ chen nags kyi rin po che'i zhal snga nas kyi rnam par thar pa*, handwritten *dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalogue no. 002779(9), 20b]. Both are undated, but the latter includes the author's eyewitness report of Vanaratna's passing in the Kathmandu Valley. Unfortunately, both ZHWA, 36a, and Jo nang Kun dga' grol mchog's (1507-66) biography of Rnam rgyal grags bzang, the *Rigs ldan chos kyi rgyal po rnam rgyal grags pa bzang po'i rnam par thar pa rab bsngags snyan pa'i 'brug sgra* [Ngam ring xylograph], C.P.N. catalogue no. 002751(8), 20a, are equally laconic about what transpired during their visit there.
25. ZHWA, 45b, 46a.
26. For the first, see P. C. Verhagen, *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet, Volume One. Transmission of the Canonical Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 126-8, 199-200, 300-4. The Lo tsā ba Dpal ldan grags pa mentioned in the colophon as having petitioned Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba to shoulder the task of translating this text on Sanskrit grammar, must be the same individual who is also known as Sne shangs or Glo bo Lo tsā ba Dpal ldan grags pa. He was therefore a native of what is now Nepal. For the second, see the remarks in G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, part 1, Serie Orientale Roma, IX, 1 (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1959),

16-8, who judges that "in many places the Sanskrit original has been completely misunderstood." This work was presumably written by Vasubandhu II (ca. 400-480).

27. What follows is based on the text in *The Tibetan Tripitaka, Taipei* [= Sde dge] *Edition*, ed. A. W. Barber (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991), vol. 53, no. 4428 [#4421], 111/2-3 [Do, 386b-7a].

28. This colophon is also discussed in M. Mejor, *Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa and the Commentaries Preserved in the Tanjur*, 94. He takes the admittedly very unusual term *dpe dpang* to mean an "Indian manuscript of Dpang Lo tsā ba" in the sense that *dpe dpang* = **dpang gi dpe*. I suspect this is not what is intended by *dpe dpang*, the more so since the ways in which the colophons of canonical translations and the Tibetan commentaries indicate the provenance of Sanskrit manuscripts are as a rule much more explicit.

29. My conjecture is in part based on the last great Tibetan Sanskritist Si tu Paṇ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas' (1700-74) use of the expression *rang 'grel bod dpe rnams*, "Tibetan manuscripts of the [*Bhāsya*] autocommentary," in his unfinished Abhidharmakośa commentary, for which see the *Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi tshig don rnam par 'grel pa brgya byin thog pa'i nor bu'i 'od snang*, *Collected Works*, vol. 13 (Sansal: Shesrabling Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990), 17. Si tu Paṇ chen had access to a Sanskrit manuscript of Sthiramati's commentary and occasionally directly quotes from it.

30. DPA'2, 1134.

31. On this formula, see most recently Tsering Gyalbo, G. Hazod and P. Sørensen, *Civilization at the Foot of Mount Sham-po. The Royal House of Lha Bug-pa-can and the History of G.ya'-bzang* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), 103-4, n. 311.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL ON EARLY SKYID-GRONG (GATHERED FROM LOCAL DOCUMENTS AND BKA'-BRGYUD-PA SOURCES)*

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Sources[1]

The historiography of sKyid-grong valley has more often been characterised by its sacred image than by its people, for the sandalwood statue of 'Phags-pa Wa-ti bzang-po, an object of devotion traditionally considered only second to the Jo-bo of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, has deservedly commanded the attention of Tibetan authors.

This article does not attempt even a partial history of 'Phags-pa Wa-ti bzang-po, although a few references will be made to sKyid-grong's most famous statue, for this task has been very competently undertaken in the recent past by Franz-Karl Ehrhard in his monumental work *Die Statue und der Tempel des Arya Va-ti Bzang-po - Ein Beitrág zur Geschichte und Geographie des Tibetischen Buddhismus*, Hamburg 1998.

My contribution concerns the history of two noble families of sKyid-grong whose activities influenced the religious and secular events of this land, and the interaction of their members with a few great religious masters of various periods.

Consequently, the approach adopted in this article has been to assemble elements of early sKyid-grong-pa historiography internally, i.e. from local material which directly concerns sKyid-grong and its people, rather than externally, i.e. from references to sKyid-grong extracted from literary sources on religious masters and lay people who went to visit 'Phags-pa Wa-ti bzang-po.

The present work in fact covers events in the history of sKyid-grong from the second quarter of the 7th century until iron rat 1240. In other words, I begin with the episode of the one hundred or five hundred monks from sKyid-grong, who were Srong-btsan sgam-po's officiating *bla-ma*, and end with the great Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan's (1182-1251) visit to Jo-bo 'Phags-pa Wa-ti and his defeat of the Brahmanists there.

In trying to shed some (albeit faint) light on a place as important as sKyid-grong, I have relied on a limited number of documents. These are the *mes-rabs* in the biographies of some local *bla-ma* and *gdung-rabs* of families from sKyid-grong. One source, entitled *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* and written by Blo-gros chos-'phel (1665-1727?), is local and amounts to a *gdung-rabs* of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa, one of the two families I wish to concentrate on, to which the author belonged. Despite its anomalous title,

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* I am honoured to dedicate to Gene Smith this small token of reverence. He must be credited with ferrying Tibetan studies away from the elitism of the past. He has unlocked the *sbas-yul* of Tibetan literature for the benefit of all those who care. His proverbial generosity has matched Tibetan willingness to share their culture. In the process, many literary treasures were spared a grim fate. *bKa'-drin-che*, Gene!
Some time ago, when I had already decided to contribute a work on the historiography of sKyid-grong for this volume, it was a sheer coincidence that he sent to me an electronic copy of the same Dehradun edition of *'Ba'-ra bKa'-brgyud ser-phreng* used here, without being informed that I was putting together the present work. Among his many virtues, Gene Smith is also *mngon-shes-can*!

1. I wish to thank Tashi Tsering for giving me *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* on the Byang-chub gling-pa and *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* on the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa. In the past, we had discussed the significance of some parts of the biographies of *bla-ma* from *'Ba'-ra bKa'-brgyud-pa ser-phreng* in reference to my research on the history of mNga'-ris skor-gsum. I ended up using these *rnam-thar* for the present work on sKyid-grong because their scope is somewhat limited for the history of mNga'-ris skor-gsum but definitely important for that of sKyid-grong.

indicating it only as a *dkar-chag* (of their 'Jam-dpal-gling temple in sKyid-grong), it is also a *gdung-rabs*. In fact the *dkar-chag* is appended as the final section to the family's *gdung-rabs*.

Other documents on the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa concern two masters of the 'Ba'-ra bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition and, in particular, important material is found in the *mes-rabs* of their biographies contained in *'Ba'-ra bKa'-brgyud bla-ma'i ser-phreng*. They are respectively *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (dedicated to the life of the author of *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag*)[2] and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* both by Chos-dbyings rdo-rje (1772-1838).

rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag is the main text used here, and my treatment of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa is based on it not so much because it is the earliest text of them but because it has the sharpest and most reliable account of the family's history. In some cases, the other sources introduce variant versions of the accounts (*Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, especially, adds several details which are missing elsewhere), and are used here to complement the treatment of the *dkar-chag*.

Another significant *mes-rabs* is the one opening the biography of Byams-pa phun-tshogs (a *bla-ma* from sKyid-grong renowned for his xylograph editions in Gung-thang). The *mes-rabs* of *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* recounts the lives of the Byang-chub gling-pa of sKyid-grong, the other family on which I wish to concentrate.[3] It is the only text available to me for this assessment.

Finally, I have used *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* by Maitri-ba-dzra only marginally, for some specific historical notions. Although it contains significant and interesting material, this work mainly concerns the 'Phags-pa Wa-ti bzang-po statue, which is not the subject of the present work. Hence, the texts used in what follows can be classified into local documents and sources belonging to the bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition.

Noble families of sKyid-grong during the imperial period: the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa and the Byang-chub gling-pa

The 'Jam-dpal gling-pa and the Byang-chub gling-pa families, whose history is the history of sKyid-grong itself, settled in Grwa and gNas respectively. Both of these places are at a very short distance from the centre of sKyid-grong where the temple of 'Phags-pa Wa-ti is situated and thus are in the vicinity of the locality commonly named sKyid-grong-'thil in antiquity (whereas the sKyid-grong-rdzong of more recent times refers to a wider area). Grwa is to the east of sKyid-grong; gNas is to the north-east.

Grwa, the residence of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa family, is the more ancient of the two. The first documented reference to it occurs during the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po (617-650). This is also the earliest reference to sKyid-grong, which must have already been established by then.

A legend associates the name of the ancestral site Grwa to the fact that the one hundred or five hundred monks (*grwa-pa*, hence the place name Grwa),[4] who became the *bla-mchod* of Srong-btsan sgam-po, were from this locality.[5] In which of Srong-btsan sgam -po's twenty-two regnal years (629-650) this happened is not specified in the material available to me. However, *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* says that, when 'Phags-pa Wa-ti was brought to sKyid-grong, a water channel was arranged to provide for Srong-btsan sgam-po's

2. Another biography of Blo-gros chos-'phel entitled *dPal-ldan bla-ma dam-pa Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar rin-po-che baidu-rya 'od-snang* written by 'Ba'-ra ba Ngag-dbang ye-shes (in *bKa'-brgyud ser-phreng chen-mo*, vol. III, p. 234-271) has a *mes-rabs* section which is more succinct than those of the other two *rnam-thar* cited in the present work and without additional or differing information. Therefore, it is not used here.

3. The name sKyid-grong seems to be an abridgement of sKyid-mi grong-bdun ("the seven villages of happy people"), as often the locality is called *in extenso* (e.g. *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar*, f. 16a,2 and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* p. 400,1), and also of sKyid-pa'i grong-khyer ("the town of happy people") (e.g. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar*, f. 2b,2).

4. The sources vary on their number, *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (see n. 5) is in favour of the former, whereas *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* (see n. 7) is for the latter.

5. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 397 lines 4-5): "During the time of the incarnate chos-rgyal Srong-btsan sgam-po, here (in sKyid-grong) some one hundred *gra-pa* were established as *bla-mchod* ("officiating *bla-ma*") [of this king], hence this place was called Gra".

bla-mchod, showing that the appointment of the Grwa-pa monks was practically contemporaneous with the construction of the temple built to house the self-originated sandalwood statue. When taken to the border of Tibet, the statue spoke and refused to be brought farther; hence, a temple was built there to house it.[6] The same *dkar-chag* claims that the name given to the sandalwood image was derived from the existence of the water channel (*wa-ti*) in the vicinity of the temple.[7]

'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar dates the foundation of Wa-ti'i lha-khang to the year of the snake 645.[8] This date lends credibility to the account of the appointment of the monks from Grwa as Srong-btsan sgam-po's *bla-mchod*, and places this event in the period after the major feats of his reign (the conquests of Sum-pa, rGya, 'A-zha, Sechuan and Zhang-zhung, as well as the construction of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang) had been accomplished.

The ancestors of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa family provided ministers to the kingdom during the reign of several *lha-sras btsan-po*. The indication of their names in the sources makes it clear that the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa of sKyid-grong belonged to the mGos clan. Some of their ministers also were among the most distinguished supporters of Buddhism.

The sources say, with a rather shaky chronology, that, during the period of the religious kings of Yar-lung which began with Srong-btsan sgam-po, five generations of mGos clan members (sTag-ri gung-btsan, 'Brug-sgra rdo-rje, lHa-bzang yab-lhag (also known as Khri-bzang yab-lhag), lHun-grub-'bar and Padma gung-btsan) resided in dBus.[9]

The chronological sequence of these ministers is not established and it is not easy to assign them to the reign of one or several *lha-sras btsan-po*. Khri-bzang yab-lhag belonged to the third generation of the mGos clan in dBus. He was a minister of Khri-srong lde-btsan, but also served Khri Ral-pa-can in his old age, and

6. Wa-ti'i lha-khang was not the only temple in sKyid-grong which the sources credit to Srong-btsan sgam-po. In the well known classifications of the network of temples in order to suppress the *srin-mo gan-rkyal* and finally to accomplish the construction of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, which the literature attributes to this king, there is Mang-yul Byang-sprin (also known as Byams-sprin). This temple is normally included among the *yang-'dul gtsug-lag-khang* and was built to pin down the left sole of the *srin-mo*'s foot. What is less well known is that other temples were built in Mang-yul as part of the scheme. They appear in the expanded classifications of the scheme contained in *Nyang-ral chos-'byung* (p. 242 line 19-p. 244 line 6), *lDe'u Jo-sras chos-'byung* (p. 115 line 15-p. 117 line 7), *mkhas-pa lDe'u chos-'byung* (p. 284 line 19-p. 286 line 20) and *sNgon-gyi me-tog-gi phreng-ba* (p. 16 line 14-p. 19 line 15) (see my forthcoming work, "The narrative of Srong.btsan sgam.po subduing the demoness: A study of its scheme and historical implications"). The same texts add a branch temple of Byang-sprin, known as sTang-sprin, which may have been in Mang-yul, but this is not sure. Another temple belonging to an expanded classification of the *mtha'-'dul gtsug-lag-khang* is sBang-chen brtsegs-pa, which the sources unanimously place in Mang-yul.
7. *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* (f. 14b line 7-f. 15a line 2): "Since the *gtsug-lag-khang* at sKyid-grong had been founded, [the statue of 'Phags-pa Wa-ti] stayed [here]. At that time, this area having plentiful meadows and water springs everywhere, a *wa-ti* ("water channel") was made. (f. 15a) This was sufficient water to prepare tea for the monks who were the *bla-mchod* of the king. It is said that this was a blessing of Jo-bo. Since this was in accordance with the earlier words of 'Jama-li, it became known as 'Phags-pa Wa-ti bzang-po".
8. *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* (f. 18b line 4) reads: "878 [years] elapsed between the arrival of the self-originated 'Phags-pa in Ma-yul (spelled as) (i.e. in 645) and the present water horse year (1522)". *sNga-'gyur rnying-ma'i brjod-pa* (p. 35 lines 1-2) (bSod-nams don-grub, *sNga-'gyur rnying-ma'i byung-ba mdo-tsam brjod-pa padma ra-ga'i do-shal gzhon-nu dgyes-pa'i mgul-rgyan zhes-bya-ba bzhugs-so*, Ngag-dbang phun-tshogs ed., Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, Beijing 1991) has a different opinion: "When [Srong-btsan sgam-po] was fifteen years old (631), dge-slong A-kara-ma-ti-shi-la brought the self-originated 'Phags-pa".
9. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3a lines 3-5): "The people inhabiting the Land of Snows have many clans known as *mi'u gdong-drug* (sic for *gdung-drug*). However, we (i.e. the mGos) anciently originated from the *lha*. Not long after descending to the country of Tibet, beginning with sTag-ri gung-btsan, [and then] 'Brug-sgra rdo-rje, lHa-bzang yab-lhag and lHun-grub-'bar were the religious ministers (*chos-blon*) of the *mnga'-bdag mes-dbon*. It is well known that, until the fifth generation, [that of] the religious minister *bde-blon* (*bde-srung blon-po* "security minister", i.e. Padma gung-btsan), they lived in dBus of Tibet".

died before gNas-rnying was founded by rGya 'Jam-dpal gsang-ba sometime between 821-822 and 836.[10] According to a note in *Myang chos-'byung*, Khri-bzang yab-lhag was the grandfather of Padma gung-btsan,[11] which would place the activity of the latter mGos minister during the reign of 'Od-srung and possibly dPal-'khor-btsan.[12]

On the other hand, the notion in *gNas-rnying skyes-bu rnams-kyi rnam-mthar* that Khri-bzang yab-lhag died when he was aged sixty-seven (see n. 10) would put his birth in the fifties or sixties of the 8th century and this would make him a younger contemporary of Khri-srong lde-btsan, for whom he built temples. Two generations of ministers belonging to the mGos family, the ancestors of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa of sKyid-grong, before the time of Khri-srong lde-btsan would not necessarily make sTag-ri gung-btsan a contemporary of Srong-btsan sgam-po, given that four generations of kings divided Srong-btsan sgam-po from Khri-srong lde-btsan (Gung-srong gung-btsan, Mang-srong mang-btsan, 'Dus-srong mang-po-rje and Khri-lde gtsug-brtan). But these are slippery grounds because calculations by *mi-rabs* ("generations") are never too accurate, and this is no more than a suggestion which needs sound corroboration.

Moreover, it is not clear whether sTag-ri gung-btsan and 'Brug-sgra rdo-rje were father and son. If not, their lifetimes could have covered the reigns of those kings, especially since Gung-srong gung-btsan died in infancy. But the reason to believe that sTag-ri gung-btsan, the earliest of the five mGos ministers, lived during Srong-btsan sgam-po's time is that the sources associate his existence with that of *chos-rgyal mes-*

Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar (p. 283 lines 2-3): "During the times of the *chos-rgyal me-dbon*, beginning with bka'i blon-po 'Gos sTag-ri gung-btsan, [and then] 'Brug-sgra rdo-rje, Khri-bzang yab-lhag, lHun-grub-'bar until the *chos-blon* (i.e Padma gung-btsan), five generations lived in dBus".

Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar (p. 397 line 5-p. 398 line 1) reads: "It is believed that this lineage originally descended from the *lha*. During the times of the *chos-rgyal mes-dbon*, beginning with bka'i blon-po 'Gos sTag-ri gung-btsan, [and then] 'Brug-sgra rdo-rje, Khri-bzang yab-lhag, and lHun-grub-'bar, five generations [of the mGos family members] stayed in dBus until the religious minister (*chos-blon*) *ge-byon* (sic for *bde-blon* or *bde-srung blon-po*), said to have been Padma gung-btsan, who was the son's son (*bus-bu*) of this blon-po Khri-bzang yab-lhag (p. 398). The latter was the *nang-blon* of chos-rgyal Khri-srong lde-btsan".

10. *gNas-rnying skyes-bu rnams-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 4a lines 2-3): "Hence, the *bla-ma* (i.e. rGya 'Jam-dpal gsang-ba) and mGos Khyung-rgod-rtsal went to this place where blon-po mGos [lHa-bzang yab-lhag] resided. ['Jam-dpal gsang-ba] gave him many teachings. He spent three years here. *Blon-po chen-po* died when he was sixty-seven". For the assessment of the period in which gNas-rnying was founded, see my paper "The history of the lineages of gNas rnying summarized as its "ten greatnesses" in the sources (a survey of the period from the second half of the 8th century to the beginning of the Sa skya pa rule)", in H. Blezer, *Tibet Past and Present,* vol. 1, Proceedings of the 8th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000, Brill, Leiden 2002.
11. *Myang chos-'byung* (p. 77 lines 8-14): "In antiquity, mGos Khri-bzang yab-lhag [was] the *nang-blon chen-po* of Khri-song lde'u-btsan [note: one is requested to investigate [whether] this was 'Gos Padma gung-btsan. In antiquity, 'Gos Khri-bzang, also known as 'Gos Khri-'bring khang-bzang, the great *nang-blon* of king Khri-srong lde'u-btsan, being the father, the son of this *chos-blon* ("religious minister") was known as 'Gos-kyi Padma gung-btsan. He was a minister. He was 'Gos Padma gung-btsan. Moreover, 'Gos Khri-bzang yab-lhag was the grandfather of 'Gos-kyi Padma gung-btsan and the father of Khri-'bring khang-bzang]". There is a major discrepancy with *gNas-rnying skyes-bu rnams-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3b lines 3-4) for the latter source says that mGos Khri-bzang yab-lhag's sons were mGos Khyung-rgod-rtsal and rDo-rje-rtsal.
12. The period in which Padma gung-btsan lived is disputed in the sources and this is probably the reason that led the anonymous author[s] of *Myang chos-'byung* to add a note on the relation of kinship between 'Gos Khri-bzang yab-lhag and Padma gung-btsan. For instance dPa'-bo includes Padma gung-btsan among the Buddhist ministers of Khri-srong lde-btsan (*mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston* p. 303 line 8) (dPa'-bo gTsug-lag phreng-ba, *Dam-pa chos-kyi 'khor-lo bsgyur-ba rnams-kyi byung-ba gsal-bar byed-pa mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston*, rDo-rje rgyal-po ed., Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, Beijing 1986). On the contrary, 'Gos Khri-bzang yab-lhag is profusely quoted in *sBa-bzhed* as the minister of Khri-srong lde-btsan, whereas Padma gung-btsan is absent from the latter text. These considerations plus the note on the genealogy of the 'Gos in *Myang chos-'byung* cited above (see n. 11) have led me to assess mGos Padma gung-btsan to a period after the reign of Khri-srong lde-btsan.

dbon rnam-gsum, and since they also document that he was not active during the reign of Khri-srong lde-btsan (the second religious king), he must have been a contemporary of Srong-btsan sgam-po.[13]

Since the time of the one hundred or five hundred Grwa-pa *bla-mchod* of Srong-btsan sgam-po, sKyid-grong became a stronghold of Buddhism and, in some remarkable cases, a sanctuary for Dam-pa'i Chos when it experienced difficult times in the land of Tibet. The persecution of Buddhism which occurred at the end of Khri-lde gtsug-brtan Mes Ag-tshom's life was one of them. As is well known, after this king was assassinated in the year of the sheep 755 (the prosecution of his murderers is recorded in the entry for this year in the *Tun-huang Annals*),[14] Buddhism suffered a setback under a new law, defined as *khrims-bu-chung* in the sources.[15] The great Jo-bo of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, which is said to have been taken to this temple from Ra-mo-che by the Chinese princess Kong-jo, was hurriedly taken away from lHa-sa to avoid worse consequences.[16]

Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar fixes at fourteen the number of years during which the statue remained in sKyid-grong before being taken back to lHa-sa.[17] It thus seems more or less to correspond with the intervening period before the restoration of Buddhism accomplished by the young Khri-srong lde-btsan.

Hence, it seems that sKyid-grong did not suffer the political and religious tensions that troubled the central regions of Bod. If the building of bSam-yas marked the beginning of the reintroduction of Buddhism which led to the establishment of *bstan-pa snga-dar*, the relatively calm situation in sKyid-grong seemingly favoured Buddhist activities before the construction of bSam-yas in dBus. sBa gSal-snang writes somewhat autobiographically in *sBa-bzhed* that when Bo-dhi-sa-twa was invited (by him) to Mang-yul, they built two *gtsug-lag-khang* locally.[18]

In accordance with a system documented both in the ancient material and later sources, religious exponents of families who had served the *lha-sras btsan-po* were rewarded with an appointment as *bla-ma* of territories granted to them and their successors in perpetuity. This was also the case with a little known *bla-mchod* of Khri-srong lde-btsan called Thar-pa shes-rab and belonging to the Khang family (which was to become the Byang-chub gling-pa) from sKyid-grong. He was appointed to the same office in sKyid-grong

13. The mGos family remained in dBus for another two generations after mGos Khri-bzang yab-lhag was transferred to Myang-stod to reside in the area of gNas-rnying. Thus, the transfer of the mGos did not pertain to the entire clan of dBus. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that lHun-grub-'bar, the member of the next mGos generation residing in dBus according to *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag*, *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, is not included among the scions of Khri-bzang yab-lhag by the sources dealing with gNas-rnying, thus possibly indicating that only a fraction of the mGos of dBus moved to Myang-stod. This is also the case with Khri-'bring khang-bzang, who is indicated as Khri-bzang yab-lhag's son according to the note in *Myang chos-'byung* mentioned above.
14. See *Tun-huang Annals* (lines 12-16) (in *Tun-hong nas thon-pa'i Bod-kyi lo-rgyus yig-cha*, p. 30) (*Tun-hong-nas thon-pa'i Bod-kyi lo-rgyus yig-cha*, annotated by Dung-dkar Blo-bzang 'phrin-las, dBang-rgyal and bSod-nams eds., Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, Beijing 1992).
15. See, e.g., *sBa-bzhed* (p. 9 lines 15-16): "When *khrims-bu-chu* (sic for *chung*) was enforced, the noble religion was destroyed", and *mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston* (p. 303 line 15).
16. *sBa-bzhed* tells that the Jo-bo of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang was initially buried under the sand after it was not possible to take it back to China (ibid. p. 8 line 22-p. 9 line 4). But, following calamities occurring to the ministers who were against Buddhism, it was brought to sKyid-grong (ibid. p. 9 line 20-p. 10 line 1).
17. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 396 line 5-p. 397 line 2): "When chos-rgyal Khri-srong lde-btsan had not yet reached maturity, some wicked ministers, such as Ma-zhang Khron-pa-skyes, who opposed Buddhism, destroyed the Buddhist law. A plan was made to take lHa-ldan *ston-pa rin-po-che* to China, but even a thousand men could not move it [any farther]. After they buried it underground, many inauspicious signs occurred. (p. 397) Thinking to carry it to India, when the two mules, carrying it, reached Mang-yul, it is said that it was not possible to cross through the gorges on the way. Hence it is said that Jo-bo Shaka yid-bzhin nor-bu remained in sKyid-grong for some fourteen years".
18. *sBa-bzhed* (p. 11 lines 10-13): "Since [sBa gSal-snang] made a request to the Bal[-po] king to be influential [with Shanta-rakshi-ta], he invited to Mang-yul Shanta-rakshi-ta, [called] Zhi-ba-'tsho in Tibetan, [and] known as Bo-dhi-

that he had held at court. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* says that Khri-srong lde-btsan was asked to bestow such a grant by two sKyid-grong-pa members of the same family. In fact, the *mes-rabs* in this biography documents the involvement of people from sKyid-grong in the construction of bSam-yas, since the two who advocated Thar-pa shes-rab's candidacy for sKyid-grong *bla-mchod* were the head-carpenter and the sculptor of the clay statues.[19]

Hence, members of the Khang Byang-chub gling-pa from gNas left sKyid-grong and, like the mGos ancestors of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa, served the *lha-sras btsan-po* in dBus.

They returned home after the year of the sheep 779 when bSam-yas was completed.[20] It will be shown below when those of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa settled in sKyid-grong.

Thar-pa shes-rab was the ancestor of the Khang family of sKyid-grong and the religious exponent who, upon his return from dBus, first settled with members of his family in sKyid-grong-'thil.[21] Soon after, Thar-pa shes-rab was responsible for the foundation of Byang-chub-gling, the hermitage from which the name of the noble Byang-chub gling-pa family derives.[22] Byang-chub-gling was thus a holy place in sKyid-grong established during the reign of Khri-srong lde-btsan.

The links between bSam-yas and sKyid-grong extend beyond Khri-srong lde-btsan's patronage of Thar-pa shes-rab and the participation of the latter's relatives in the construction of Guru Padma's monastery in Brag-dmar. A reference in *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* to the rather rare existence of a temple which, very much like the scheme of Srong-btsan sgam-po's demoness, is classified as a *yang-'dul lha-khang* of bSam-yas, points to another association between the sKyid-grong area and the latter holy place.[23]

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sa-twa, who possessed many qualities of knowledge and brilliance. In Mang-yul, they built two *gtsug-lag-khang*". This is confirmed by Ne'u paṇḍi-ta (*sNgon-gyi gtam me-tog-gi phreng-ba* p. 28 lines 1-5) (Ne'u paṇḍi-ta Grags-pa smon-lam blo-gros, *sNgon-gyi gtam me-tog-gi phreng-ba*, in *Bod-kyi lo-rgyus deb-ther khag-lnga*, Chab-spel Tshe-brtan phun-tshogs ed., Gangs-can rig-mdzod, vol. 9, Bod-ljongs mi-dmangs dpe-skrun-khang, lHa-sa 1990).

19. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 2a line 4-f. 2b line 3): "In antiquity, the *bla'i mchod-gnas* ("officiating *bla-ma*") of chos-rgyal Khri-srong lde-btsan, the monk of Khang (Khang-gi ban-sde (sic)) Thar-pa shes-rab succeeded in accomplishing the task of serving the king from the viewpoint of the two systems (i.e. religious and secular). At that time, (f. 2b) as both thc master carpenter, the ancestor (*mes-po*) [of the Byang-chub gling-pa family], ha-shang 'De-ba, and [the maker of] the clay sculptures, the ancestor (*mes-po*) [of the Byang-chub gling-pa family], sTag-btsan klu-btsan, who were the builders of bSam-yas Mi-'gyur lhun-gyis grub-pa'i gtsug-lag-khang, earnestly pleaded with king Khri-srong lde-btsan: "You should appoint ban-sde Thar-pa shes-rab to be *bla'i mchod-nas* at our place, the "town of happiness" in Mang-yul (*Mang-yul sKyid-pa'i grong-khyer*, i.e. Mang-yul sKyid-grong), which is the land of the sandalwood self-originated 'Phags-pa sPyan-ras-gzigs, where, during summer the snow does not melt, [and], during winter the leaves and flowers do not dry". As they pleaded so, the king promised to fulfil their wish saying: "I will send you to hold the land at the Bal-Bod border and to render service to the sandalwood self-originated statue of 'Phags-pa".".

20. dPa'-bo gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba has published the *bka'-gtsigs* of the bSam-yas edict, a document contemporary with the construction of the temple, where it is said that its receptacles (*rten*) were installed in a sheep year, on the tenth day of the spring month (*mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston* p. 371 lines 4-5) (see n. 12). This sheep year has been assessed by Richardson as 779 which he considers the year of bSam-yas' completion (Richardson H., "The First Tibetan Chos 'byung", *Tibet Journal*, vol. 5 1980, p. 63).

21. Thar-pa shes-rab's residence in the area, where 'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i lha-khang stands, was reportedly between 'Ba'-ra lha-khang and lHa-khang dKar-ru (see n. 37), the former being the *yang 'dul* temple of bSam-yas (see n. 23) and the latter being the temple founded by Jo-bo-rje (see n. 34 and 35).

22. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 2b lines 3-5): "They arrived at this country. They settled down to the south of the 'Phags-pa of Mang-yul sKyid-grong. At that time, sKyid-grong-'thil was chosen as the residence of Thar-pa shes-rab, the ancestor of the Khang [family]. As for the hermitage, he resided during summer at the place resembling a *khyung* landing with spread wings on the ground, which is above a lateral [valley] to the north-east of 'Phags-pa. He also established the hermitage known as Byang-chub-gling, which is to the north-west of this area. [Thar-pa shes-rab] resided there".

23. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a lines 5-6): "The name 'Ba'-ra lha-khang was given to the *yang-'dul lha-khang* of bSam-yas. At present, between these two (dKar-ru and 'Ba'-ra) is a big heap of stones. This was the residence (*gzim-khang*) of Thar-pa shes-rab".

The link between Mang-yul and the main temples of the sPu rgyal dynasty kings is again introduced in *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* which adds that 'On-chang-do too had a *mtha'-'dul lha-khang* in sKyid-grong.[24] The only difference between the two sources is that the former classifies it as a *yang-'dul* temple, whereas the latter prefers to consider both of them as *mtha'-'dul*. The original name of bSam-yas' *yang-'dul lha-khang* is lost, but not the later one which is given as 'Ba'-ra lha-khang at the time of Jo-bo-rje's sojourn in sKyid-grong (see below). The name of 'On-cang-do's *mtha'-'dul lha-khang* is given as dGe-rgyas-kyi lha-khang, later known as Sa-lung-ma.

Although there exists a scheme in *lDe'u Jo-sras chos-'byung*, according to which the temples built by Srong-btsan sgam-po to pin down the limbs of the demoness are attributed to Khri-srong lde-btsan as a further religious activity at the same holy places (see Vitali, "The narrative of Srong btsan sgam po subduing the demoness: A study of its scheme and historical implications", forthcoming), the present author has not seen Srong-btsan sgam-po's scheme used to classify temples built by Khri-srong lde-btsan and Ral-pa-can.[25]

On the other hand, one must stop short of suggesting that, in this case, the scheme of Srong-btsan sgam-po's demoness is applied to the temples of the latter two kings, because this notion of the sKyid-grong border temples is an isolated example, and may not comprise other temples to form a network of *lha-khang*.

After the last phase of *bstan-pa snga-dar* during the reign of Ral-pa-can, a long period of silence befell sKyid-grong as far as can be seen from the local literature.

Noble families of sKyid-grong during *bstan-pa phyi-dar*: the Byang-chub gling-pa

Both the histories of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa and Byang-chub gling-pa, as recounted in the sources discussed in this work, have generation gaps in their genealogies.

The gap in the Byang-chub gling-pa genealogy is too obvious to create historical problems, for it extends from after the foundation of Byang-chub-gling during the reign of Khri-srong lde-btsan until *bstan-pa phyi-dar*, thereby covering the dark period, whose duration is even longer than that normally found in most of the other sources.

The gap in the genealogy of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa requires more subtle assessment and allows for an attempt at fixing the chronology of the missing generations.

I will introduce first the history of the Byang-chub gling-pa during early *bstan-pa phyi-dar* and only thereafter that of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa.

The obscurity in the history of the Byang-chub gling-pa is dispelled with Jo-bo-rje A-ti-sha's visit to sKyid-grong, having come to Tibet on the invitation of the ruler of the mNga'-ris skor-gsum kingdom. In fact, following his sojourn of three years in Upper West Tibet, he was due to return to Vikramashila in fulfilment of the promise made by Nag-tsho lo-tsa-ba Tshul-khrims rgyal-ba (1017-?) to bring Jo-bo-rje back to India after that length of time. Not much was traditionally known about what prevented Nag-tsho lo-tsa-ba from keeping his word, but for the accounts that an outbreak of war had made travel impossible, and their description of Nag-tsho's consternation over breaking his word and Jo-bo-rje's ambivalence over returning to India, knowing that his destiny was to remain in Tibet, which are too well known to be cited here from the many sources relating these events.[26]

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24. *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* (f. 23a line 7-f. 23b line 1): "Moreover, the area from here until the *gro-lam* ("wayside halting place for food") is believed to be very sacred. From the *gtsug-lag-khang* of the self-originated [statue] (f. 23b) until pho-brang rDzong-dkar, in sKyid-rong itself are 'Ba'-ra lha-khang, the *tha-'dul* (spelled as) of bSam-yas [and] dpal dGe-rgyas-kyi lha-khang, nowadays known as Sa-lung-ma, the *tha-'dul* of 'On-'chang-sdo (spelled as)".

25. Traces of schemes resembling that of Srong btsan sgam po's *srin mo* and attributed to Khri srong lde btsan and Guru Padma 'byung gnas, but on a modest scale, are found in specific areas of Tibet. The case of Glo bo and a local *srin mo* laying on her back, whose subjugation led Guru Padma to build Glo dGe kar (see, e.g., O-rgyan gling-pa, *Padma bKa'-thang*, Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-hang, Chengdu 1987, p. 377 lines 2-16), is one of them.

26. I wish to cite here mChims Nam-mkha'-grags, *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (p. 161 line 4-p. 162 line 2), for it is a source that introduces in some detail how A-ti-sha came to know that his fate was to end his days in Tibet: "When the *lo-tsa-ba* went to rGya gar earlier, at the time of receiving *dBu-ma rtogs-ge 'bar-ba* from Jo-

In the *mes-rabs* of *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* it is written that Jo-bo-rje sojourned for one year in sKyid-grong, waiting for the invitation by the learned masters of dBus-gTsang to reach him.[27] This is a deviant account of the events, for, in most cases, 'Brom-ston-pa (1017-1076) is said to have gone to Pu-hrang rGya-zhing[28] to deliver the invitation to Jo-bo-rje.[29] According to *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar*, Jo-bo-rje reached Mang-yul still without knowing that he was expected in dBus-gTsang and only the occurrence of the border war prevented him from leaving before the arrival of the summons from Central Tibet.

This account helps to fix Jo-bo-rje's arrival in gTsang to fire dog 1046 rather than wood bird 1045, given that his one year sojourn in sKyid-grong is confirmed by mChims Nam-kha'-grags (1210-1285) in his *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (see n. 35). He engaged in numerous activities, including founding a temple and giving elaborate teachings. The detail in which these are described leaves little doubt about the historical fact of his prolonged presence and work in sKyid-grong. Although the lack of reference to his performing *rab-gnas* at the temple which he founded (Jo-bo-rje consecrated many *lha-khang* during his years in Tibet) may imply that he did not stay to see it completed, there are no particular reasons to antedate Jo-bo-rje's arrival in Central Tibet. In fact, it seems that Jo-bo-rje and his entourage were not in a hurry to go to Central Tibet because the official summons from the masters of that land had not reached him yet.

Moreover, the version of events in *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* sheds light on the matter of Jo-bo-rje's decision not to go back to India with some circumstantial precision. This source provides details of the war which prevented his return, making it appear as a much less insuperable obstacle than is normally held. It amounted to a border conflict war on the frontier between present-day Nepal and Tibet and the

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bo at Gho-so-ma-pu-ri, Jo-bo said: "'Phags-pa sPyan-ras-gzigs gave me a prophecy which said: "[You] will leave [your] body behind in Tibet in twenty years from now due to [karmic] ripening. After being reborn as Nam-mkha' dri-ma me-pa, the son of a *lHa*, in dGa'-ldan due to the accumulation of prayers, [you] will listen to profound and extensive teachings from mGon-po Byams-pa". Then, two years after, ['Phags-pa sPyan-ras-gzigs appeared to me] at 'Bi-kra-ma-shila and said: "After leaving your body in Tibet in eighteen years from now due to [karmic] ripening, you will proceed to listen, with your mind and body, to teachings from mGon-po Byams-pa". Due to the power of prayers, (p. 162) disregarding whether I will go [next], I am [bound to] stay in Tibet". According to *Lo-tsa-ba'i bstod-pa*: "At the time of giving *rTog-ge 'bar-ba* in So-ma-pu-ri, you said: "[I] will transfer [my] life in twenty years from now". Two years later, at 'Bi-kra ma-shi-ni-la (spelled as), you said: "[I]will transfer [my] life in eighteen years from now. I will leave [my] body in Tibet".".

27. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 2b line 7-f. 3a line 1): "[Jo-bo-rje] was compelled to stay one year in Mang-yul, as 'Brom-ston-pa had sent a letter to the dBus-gTsang (f. 3a) masters to invite Jo-bo, [but the invitation] had not yet arrived". His one year stay in sKyid-grong is confirmed by mChims Nam-mkha'-grags in his *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (p. 162 line 2) (see below n. 35).
28. See, e.g., rDo-rje mdzes-'od, *bKa'-brgyud rnam-thar chen-mo* (p. 272 line 6-p. 273 line 1) (rDo-rje mdzes-'od, *bKa'-brgyud-kyi rnam-thar chen-mo rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod gdos-'od 'byung-gnas*, 'Bri-gung bKa'-brgyud-pa from the Nepal-Tibet Borderland, D.Tsondu Senghe ed., Bir Tibetan Society, Bir 1985).
29. mChims Nam-mkha'-grags, *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (p. 157 line 6-p. 158 line 2): "Jo-bo thought to go back to rGya-gar. Despite the original agreement and his determination to accompany him back, [Nag-tso] lo-tsa-ba could not ask him [to go back] because Jo-bo was pleased to be with lha-btsun-pa [Byang-chub-'od]. *dGe-bshes ston-pa* (i.e. 'Brom-ston-pa) too was not able to make [his own] earnest request. However, ['Brom-]ston-pa [finally] reported (*snyan-du-gsol*) to him: "[dBus-gTsang] is a land where [people] have depth of mind and broad vision, and [where] there is a *rgyal-khrims*. Given that the *gung-blon chen-po*, who were capable persons, were provided with knowledge, (p. 158) there are many *gtsug-lag-khang* such as lHa-sa and bSam-yas, and monks". He requested: "They all will be pleased to have Jo-bo staying there". Jo-bo was very pleased".
Ibid. (f. 160 line 6-p. 161 line 1): "Then, the *dge-bshes* (i.e. 'Brom-ston-pa) left [Pu-hrang] accompanying Jo-bo *dpon-g.yog*, and delayed [the duration of the journey] as much as possible, hoping that the Tibetan masters would come (p. 161), [while] the *lo-tsa-ba* (i.e. Nag-tsho) made it as fast as possible. The Tibetan masters not having come, they reached Mang-yul in order to proceed to Bal-po rdzong".

parties are described, on one side, as the Bal-po rdzong-pa of *rong nub* and *shar*, and on the other, what the text defines as Sa-Mu-Ti rnam-gsum.[30]

The Bal-po rdzong-pa were troops controlling outposts of the Kathmandu Valley in that border land.[31] The reference to *rong nub* and *shar* very likely pertains to the bifurcation of the area (presently in Nepal) into two valleys: the one in the east, later known as Glang-thang, and the collateral valley to its west.

Identification of the people or the territories classified under the name Sa-Mu-Ti rnam-gsum is more difficult. It seems to this author that it may refer to people of Tibetan origin, and thus ethnically distinct from the Newar, or to place names in the Tibetan-speaking world. There are indicators that the extension of the Tibetan world in antiquity reached farther south than the present frontier in the sKyid-grong/Glang-thang area (see below) and that the Bal-po rdzong-pa may have been settled in positions closer to the Kathmandu Valley, but within the two divisions of the borderland on the side of present-day Nepal.

The outcome of the war is unknown. The sources do not pay attention to it thereafter, since they mention it only as the pretext for A-ti-sha not to go back to India, and concentrate on his successive enterprises in Tibet. The limited scale of the conflict is another indication that Jo-bo-rje had already made up his mind to remain in Tibet, and thus felt convenient that the involvement of the Kathmandu Valley in the conflict blocked the only direct and easily negotiable access to central India available to him.

During his sojourn in sKyid-grong, he gave teachings in Grwa and Lan-bde, but Jo-bo-rje preferred the gNas valley which reminded him of India.[32]

The Byang-chub gling-pa and the other members of the same family, known as Khyim-po che-ba,[33] who also were inhabitants of gNas, invited him to their place. In gNas, Jo-bo-rje founded Byams-pa'i lha-

30. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 2b lines 6-7): "After [Jo-bo-rje] diffused the teachings [in Gu-ge], due to dge-bshes Gung-thang-pa Nag-tsho lo-tsa-ba's promise to *slob-dpon* to bring him back to rGya-gar after three years, he (Nag-tsho) thought to bring him to rGya-gar. When they arrived in Mang-yul, those who are known as Sa-Mu-Ti, altogether three (*rnam-gsum*), were fighting a war against the Bal-po rdzong-pa of the eastern and western *rong*, and it was not possible to proceed to Bal-po". The name of one of the two factions at war is cited with a deviant spelling in mChims Nam-mkha'-grags, *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (p. 161 lines 1-2) which does not mention the other: "At that time, the fight between Sa-Man-Te, altogether three, having broken out, Bal-po rdzong was off limits, and they could not proceed on. It is said that this was due to the merit of Tibet. Hence, the *lo-tsa-ba* was very worried, but Jo bo said: "Do not feel uncomfortable. It is not our fault, because it is beyond our control". It is said that the *lo-tsa-ba* was happy and urged him: "Let's go to Tibet".".

31. The king of the Kathmandu Valley who ruled at the time of the war, and probably was the lord of the Bal-po rdzong-pa, could have been Jayadeva if the *Kaiser Vamshavali* is to be credited when it says that he ruled for twenty years (assessed as 1041-1061 by Petech (Petech L., *Mediaeval History of Nepal* (750-1482), S.O.R. LIV, IsMEO, Roma 1984, p. 40)), otherwise extant colophons record Bhaskaradeva (who belonged to the Thakuri lineage) reigning in 1045 and 1047, thus possibly indicating that Jayadeva and Bhaskaradeva were co-rulers, which is the statement found in the same *Vamshavali* (ibid. p. 40-42).

32. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a lines 1-2): "While waiting in sKyid-grong, Jo-bo and his disciples gave extensive teachings in Lan-'de and Gra. From the top of the Lan-'de pass, when, [looking] downwards, he saw gNas, resembling mainland (*'thil*) rGya-gar, he said: "I will go there". They went from Gra to gNas. When they arrived at the entrance of the pass leading to gNas, since Jo bo was happy, this place, which is where he had a smile on his face, is still known at present as 'Dzum-la-kha ("the land of the pass where he smiled")".

33. The subdivisions of the Khang from Byang-chub-gling are briefly outlined in the *mes-rabs* of *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 4a) only in reference to the religious side of the family: "Among the lineage of Khang, the Khyim-po che-ba family are the *bla-ma*, [while] the Khang-mo che-ba family are the laymen. As all the brothers (i.e. Khyim-po che-ba and Khang-mo che-ba) became very meritorious, among the Khyim-po che-ba one [group] is known as the Khang-gsar-ba and one is known as the Bla-brang-pa. [Hence], they are divided into two. Among the Khang-gsar-ba descendance, one [line] went to Rong mThong-smon to be the *mchod-gnas*. This lineage, made by many *bla-ma* who showed many [signs] of their *sadhana*, still exists there. Concerning the Khang-gsar-ba, they are also divided into two [families]. Their lineage still exists to the present not having come to an end. Concerning

khang,[34] originally known as lHa-khang dKar-ru.[35] He personally made an image of an unspecified deity which was placed inside the *bum-pa* of a *mchod-rten*.[36]

The circumstances in which another temple, lHa-khang Bar-ma, was founded are somewhat more obscure than those of lHa-khang dKar-ru. It is unclear who establish it (probably not Jo-bo-rje, or he would have been credited with the enterprise) and when. Given that its construction is mentioned after that of Jo-bo-rje's temple, one may assume (but not definitively) that it was built during *bstan-pa phyi-dar*. Both temples were located in the area where Thar-pa shes-rab had settled in the 8th century, and monastic quarters were later added to them.[37]

Noble families of sKyid-grong during *bstan-pa phyi-dar* and later: the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa

From the late 9th or early 10th century until the 12th century only two generations of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa family are mentioned in the sources. Genealogical gaps during the transitional period between *bstan-pa snga-dar* and *bstan-pa phyi-dar* are quite common in literary sources. The following discussion will assess whether this gap occurs after the former period, as is more common, or during the latter, which is rare.

All the texts concerning the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa family say that Kun-dga' dpal-'byor and his younger brother, the sons of Padma gung-btsan according to them, went to mNga'-ris skor-gsum in the retinue of sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon[38] (i.e. in the early 10th century).[39] Kun-dga' dpal-'byor's younger brother was for many years the abbot of what the sources define as the Pu-hrang sde-bzhi,[40] and became known as Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po.[41] Next in the genealogical succession is Man-ston Sangs-rgyas, the son of Kun-dga' dpal-'byor according to the same sources,[42] who was a religious exponent of remarkable importance.

Man-ston Sangs-rgyas had a nephew by the name of 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po who was a disciple of bla ma Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa (1121-1193 or 1194).[43]

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the Bla-brang-pa, they are divided into two [families]". The subdivision of the Khyim-po che-ba into two families each time is too repetitive to be casual and must have followed an established pattern of kinship among its members.

Khang from Byang-chub-gling
- Khyim-po che-ba
  - Khang-gsar-ba
    - two families
  - Bla-brang-pa
    - two families
- Khang-mo che-ba

This classification of the Khang from Byang-chub-gling cannot be assessed historically, as it remains unclear when this organization of the religious (or Khyim-po che-ba) members of the family was introduced. The passage mentioned above is inserted into the *mes-rabs* of *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* immediately after concluding its treatment of the visit of Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (see below in the text). One wonders whether the inclusion at this point of the text is intentional, indicating that its introduction goes back to the period preceding the rise of Sa-skya as the main power in Tibet and thus was influenced by this turn of events, or whether it refers to an earlier time. The latter hypothesis is the correct one for the Khyim-po che-ba are first mentioned in the *rnam-thar* on the occasion of their invitation of Jo-bo-rje to gNas (see following note) in the mid 11th century.

34. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a lines 2-4): "At that time, Jo-bo was invited by the local people to Khyim-po-che and Byang-chub-gling. They served him sumptuously. He observed *dbyar-gnas* in this locality. He founded Byams-pa'i lha-khang and established great monastic quarters. At present the *lha-khang* and the three [kinds of] receptacles (i.e. body, speech and mind) have become waste and are transformed into fields. On the ruins of the [old] *lha-khang* is a [new] *lha-khang* [and] the field of the abbot is [there] to procure his maintenance".

35. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a line 5): "At that time, Byams-pa'i lha-khang founded by Jo-bo in sKyid-grong-'thil was known as lha-khang dKar-ru". mChims Nam-mkha'-grags, *Jo-bo dpal-ldan A-ti-sha'i rnam-thar rgyas-pa* (p. 162 line 2) records the name of the temple in a slightly different way: "Then, during his one year [stay] in Mang-yul, [Jo-bo-rje] built lHa-khang dkar-po".

36. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a lines 4-5): "The image of the deity, made by [Jo-bo-rje] personally, which is inside the *bum-pa* [of the *mchod-rten*], is known as *mchod-rten-ma*".

There are two possibilities. Either Kun-dga' dpal-'byor and his brother were contemporaries of Nyi-ma-mgon, and the gap in the genealogy occurred in the period of *bstan-pa phyi-dar*, or their lives must be post-dated to the 12th century. The former hypothesis is unlikely, for it would make Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po the abbot of Pu-hrang sde-bzhi at a time when very little Buddhism was diffused in mNga'-ris skor-gsum, although during the reign of sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon a little Chos is recorded to have been practised in his kingdom (Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, p. 164-165 and n. 220).

It is more probable that Man-ston Sangs-rgyas' uncle, Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po, was active in Pu-hrang around the early 12th century or in the second quarter of that century. Indeed, the statement that Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po was the abbot of Pu-hrang sde-bzhi seems to confirm the fact that Buddhism flourished in Pu-hrang during the first three quarters of the 12th century, even if on a minor scale by comparison with the great season of *bstan-pa phyi-dar* in sTod (see Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, p. 361-364). This state of affairs would thus be substantiated by reference to the name of a major religious master (Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po) active there.

Man-ston Sangs-rgyas' biography is succinctly but vividly outlined in the various documents, and the circumstances under which the major events in his life took place can be pieced together by collating them. His movements from place to place are not consistently recorded. According to *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b line 2), he first settled in Ding-ri and then moved to sKyid-grong. However, *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, which relates events in more detail, states that Man-ston Sangs-rgyas went to Gung-thang in the service of the local king, and consequently, Khyung-rdzong dkar-po was built at Me-rdo-thang (i.e. the plain of rDzong-dkar).[44] This is the well known palace from which the Gung-thang kings ruled and derived the name of Khab Gung-thang-pa that has characterised them ever since.

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37. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3a lines 5-7): "At present, between these two (dKar-ru and 'Ba'-ra) in the east is a big heap of stones. This was the residence (*gzim-khang*) of Thar-pa shes-rab. In this locality, the great quarters for the monks of the lineage of the Khang family were founded. These were used as the place for the visiting *lo-pan*. Owing to the patronage (?, *zin-so*) of the two systems (religious and secular), in the area chosen [by the family of Byams-pa phun-tshogs] as its residence, another [temple] was built, whose name was lha-khang Bar-ma. Following this foundation, even now our (i.e. the Byang-chub gling-pa family's) place of gNas is also known as lHa-bar (lha-khang Bar-ma). My (i.e. Byams-pa phun-tshogs') family (*tshang*) members are also known as lHa-bar-ba".
38. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3a line 5-f. 3b line 1): "Kun-dga' (f. 3b) dpal-'byor went to gTsang, and, when sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon proceeded to sPu-rang, he accompanied him [and] worked [for him] uncompromisingly". See also *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 lines 3-4) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 line 3).
39. See Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang* (Addendum One p. 548) for fixing the *terminus post quem* for the establishment of the mNga'-ris skor-gsum kingdom by sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon to the monkey year 912.
40. The way the term *sde-bzhi* is used in this passage of *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 line 3) leaves room for speculation. Does *sde-bzhi* stand for bZhi-sde, the ancient and important locality in Pu-hrang-smad to the south-west of sTag-la-mkhar or should *sde-bzhi* be taken *ad litteram*, thus implying the "four [monastic] communities" of Pu-hrang? In the latter case, the identity of these communities remains obscure.
41. *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 line 4): "Since his (i.e. Kun-dga' dpal-'byor's) younger brother became a man of religion, he was the *mkhan-po* of sPu-rang sde-bzhi for a long time. For that reason, he became known as Rab-'byor bdag-nyid chen-po". See also *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b lines 1-2) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 lines 3-4).
42. *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 lines 4-5): "Kun-dga' dpal-'byor's son [was] Man-ston Sangs-rgyas". See also *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b line 2) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 line 4).
43. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b lines 4-5): "His (i.e. Man-ston Sangs-rgyas') maternal nephew 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po received teachings from Zhang-ston g.Yu-brag-pa". See also *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 line 5) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 400 line 5).
44. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 lines 4-5): "Man-ston Sangs-rgyas went to mNga'-ris Gung-thang. He rendered service to the [Gung-thang] king. Khyung-rdzong dkar-po was founded at Me-rdo-thang".

This assessment of the period (around the second half of the 12th century) and the protagonists of the original foundation of the castle are in sharp contrast with the information and circumstances recorded in *Mar-lung pa'i rnam-thar*[45] and *Gung-thang gdung-rabs* (p. 100 line 7-p. 102 line 14). Both the latter sources say that Khyung-rdzong dkar-po was built by the Gung-thang king 'Bum-lde-mgon (1253-1280) in the years earth snake 1269-iron horse 1270. Hence, either the account in *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* is chronologically wrong or two foundations occurred at different periods of Gung-thang's history. This would mean that the original residence of the Gung-thang kings had suffered destruction in the meantime. A destruction of the original Khyung-rdzong dkar-po is recorded in *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*,[46] which says that the Byang-pa (i.e. the nomads of southern Byang-thang) were angered by its construction. They destroyed the castle and threatened the life of the heir-apparent (sadly unnamed in the text) to the Gung-thang throne, who was able narrowly to escape being caught by the Byang-pa because Man-ston rescued him and brought him to Mang-yul to save his life.[47] Man-ston was thus instrumental in averting an interruption of the Gung-thang dynasty.[48] Confusingly, a struggle between 'Bum-lde-mgon and the Byang-pa is also recorded in the year 1269 (see above n. 45), but this occurred because the Byang-pa wanted to prevent the construction of Khyung-rdzong dkar-po rather than to destroy it. Hence, the circumstances of the two conflicts do not correspond and point to two different constructions of Khyung-rdzong dkar-po, one in the 12th century and the other in the 13th.

Another important implication of Man-ston Sangs-rgyas' involvement in the foundation of Khyung-rdzong dkar-po is that the episode allows one to assess the gap in the genealogy of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa with some degree of confidence. One major reason for postdating Man-ston Sangs-rgyas' life is that there was no king of Gung-thang nor any kingdom by that name in the next generation after sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon since none of Nyi-ma-mgon's nephews, the sMad-kyi lde-gsum, became the ruler of Gung-thang. The

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45. *Mar-lung-pa'i rnam thar* (f. 348a line 5-f. 349a line 1): "Having grown up, the son of Gung-thang Khab-pa mnga-'dag bTsun-lde, rgyal-bu 'Bum-lde-(f. 348b)mgon obtained from zhang-po Sa-skya-pa the seal mGo-lung, and started the construction of a castle at Me-rdo-thang. dBon-po mGon-po-'bum, the elder of the two sons that my sister dbon-mo Klu-sman had with the Yang-thog-pa dbon-po, said: "In general, the *sde-dgo-bzhi* (sic for *sgo*) of the lHo-Nub-Gung-gsum are very arrogant, in particular, since Me-rdo-thang is a place of the Yang-thog-pa, rtsad-chung Khab-pa (i.e. the Gung-thang king) is not allowed to build a castle there. Since we have a *tsha-zhang* ("maternal uncle-nephew") relation, we will offer them houses and land if there will not be disputes. We too have our right to own this land". Having heard his words, we *dpon-slob* thought to go and occupy this land. We left in the early morning after having our food. As soon as we arrived, as the Yang-thog-pa emissaries had caused a clash with the Sa-skya-pa Hor-'dra, a servant of the Yang-thog-pa, named A-dar sdig-pa, who had come to fight for a-ce Klu-sman's son, was killed. Moreover, (f. 349a) four or five men were injured. A conflict erupted for a while. I told them to give it up [and] they left accordingly".
Ibid. (f. 350a lines 2-5): "At that time, mKhon-tsha (sic for 'Khon) 'Bum-lde-mgon was misguided and, because of the support by the *zhang po* (i.e. Sa-skya), Sa-skya dpon-chen Ag-len arrived [to Gung-thang?]. As he kept the four *mkhan-po* of the *sde-sgo-bzhi* in custody at the door of the Khab (i.e. Gung-thang) (*khab-gyi sgo*), he completely impeded them. The mNga'-ris *rgya*(sic)-*tsho bcu-gsum* were organized. Pho-brang Khyung-rdzong dkar-po was built".
46. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 lines 5-6): "When the Byang-pa, who had become enemies [of Gung-thang], destroyed (*rlag*) Khyung-rdzong, after Man-ston hid the prince [of Gung-thang] inside a well, he brought him to Mang-yul sKyid-grong in the course of one night. He [thereby] rendered a great service, for the lineage [of Gung-thang] did not become interrupted".
47. Seeking sanctuary in Mang-yul reminds one of the same attempt made by the Gung-thang king mGon-po-lde during the first Ya-rtse/Gung-thang war, who fled to sKyid-grong but met with a less fortunate end than Man-ston's protégé, since the king was captured by the invading Ya-rtse-pa troops and put to death at rDzong-dkar (see *Gung-thang gdung-rabs* p. 93 and Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, n. 797).
48. The identity of this king of Gung-thang remains uncertain, but the candidates are mGon-po-lde or more probably one of his two predecessors (dBang-phyug-lde or sKyob-pa-lde). Byang-pa revolt had reached the extent of constituting a concrete threat to the life of the prince of Gung-thang (an assassination plot?).

foundation of the Gung-thang kingdom took place only one generation later with 'Od-zer-lde, the elder son of dPal-lde, the eldest of the sMad-kyi lde-gsum.

Thus, the gap in the genealogy of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa occurred from the late 9th or early 10th century until the late 11th or early 12th century.

The anticipatory position of the literary sources, which consider Man-ston as the son of Kun-dga' dpal-'byor (and the latter as a contemporary of Nyi-ma-mgon), would have served to heighten the prestige of the 'Jam-dpal-gling-pa by attributing the foundation of 'Jam-dpal-gling (by Man-ston's son 'Jam dbyangs chen po; see below) to *bstan-pa phyi-dar*, a most fertile period for religious establishments.

Man-ston then set off from Sa-skya to Mang-yul to fulfil the request sent to this monastery by the ruler of Mang-yul for an officiating *bla-ma*.[49] The local ruler is named rgyal-bu Jo-sras but nothing more is said about him, so it is difficult to establish his identity without further information. Given that sKyid-grong is recorded in the sources to have been under Gung-thang when the *brgya-tsho bcu-gsum* (or the thirteen districts under Gung-thang) were established by 'Bum-lde-mgon before 1268, rgyal-bu Jo-sras may very well have been a prince of Mang-yul. But this is not openly stated in the material used in the present work.

An alternative conjecture is that rgyal-bu Jo-sras was the same Gung-thang *rgyal-bu* who was saved by Man-ston Sangs-rgyas from the hands of the Byang-pa and that, out of gratitude or devotion for that spiritual master, he pressed Sa-skya to send him to Mang-yul, which, in this hypothesis, was already under Gung-thang in the 12th century. The next sentence in *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*[50] seems to indicate that rgyal-bu Jo-sras was the local Mang-yul ruler but this is far from having been ascertained.

The account also seems to indicate that a *bla-ma*/patron nexus with Sa-skya existed at that time, considerably before Gung-thang benefited from matrimonial relations with Sa-skya in the following century.

After moving to sKyid-grong, Man-ston Sangs-rgyas was engaged in the foundation of a series of temples which were among the most important of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa family of Grwa. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* is the crucial source, with its sharp account of events involving Man-ston, his nephew 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po and the latter's son Rin-chen tshul-khrims, which led to the establishment of the main seats of the 'Jam-dpa gling-pa. But the best details are provided by *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, although its overall account is somewhat confused.[51]

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49. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 398 line 6-p. 399 line 3): "Moreover, since *rgyal-bu* Jo-sras, the lord and [his] subjects, did not have a *bla-mchod*, (p. 399) a prophecy was made which said: "'Jam-dbyangs chen-po will bring a request to dpal-ldan Sa-skya". After the lord and subjects discussed, they sent seven messengers. After offering an elaborate *mandala*, they addressed their request. Due to the really extraordinary *mchod-yon* bonds [between them], this order came to Man-ston Sangs-rgyas, the greatest *bu-chen* ("great disciple"), the incarnation of 'Jam-dbyangs who sits at the top of the right row, and he (Man-ston) went to Mang-yul sKyid-grong".

50. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 399 line 3): "[Man-ston] went to Mang-yul sKyid-grong. He was appointed as the head *bla*[*-ma*] of the king and ministers, and resided for a while at the huge rock resembling a flying lion".

51. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b lines 2-4): "From here, he eventually moved to Mang-yul sKyid-grong. Kan-pa'i dpon-po ha-shang sNying-po being his patron, he offered him sustenance (*rtegs* sic for *stegs*), the area of 'Jam-gling, many provisions for the monastery, and appointed him as the *bla-ma*. Since the subjects gave their sons as monks to the monastery (*btsun-khral*, lit. "monk tax"), the settlement was established and he resided in Mang-yul sKyid-grong. Subsequently, Man-ston went to Lan-bde. [Following] the prophecy of the *mkha'-'gro*, he founded Gong-lding dgon-pa".

Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar (p. 399 line 4-p. 400 line 4): "In accordance to the *lung-bstan* given to him, he went to Mun-lha. "In the east there is a mountain resembling a tent roof which is a rock in the sky like an open curtain. Establish a meditation place there". As [the prophecy] said so, he went [there]. As he stood in meditation (*bsam-gtan*) there, he founded [a *dgon-pa*] whose name is bSam-gtan-dgon. According to the instructions of rje-btsun 'Jam-dbyangs, he went on the mountain in the south-west resembling a sleeping elephant, and a rainbow resembling a spread white scarf appeared in an extraordinary way. As he blessed the land, he founded a *dgon-pa*, and, since he had moved (*spos-pa*) from bSam-gtan-dgon, (p. 400) it took the name sPos-sa. sKyid-mi grong-bdun ("the seven villages of happy people"), Kan ha-shang sNying-po-dpal and the Bong-tshogs lung-pa became his *yon-bdag*. Since information came that in the east was a Bon-po family, who would be excellent to convert to Buddhism,

Man-ston first built bSam-gtan dgon-pa. He was subsequently granted by a local chieftain named Kan-pa'i dpon-po ha-shang sNying-po-dpal the locality which was to become 'Jam-[dpal]-gling, the family seat.

After building sPos-sa dgon-pa according to *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, Man-ston went to Lan-bde, and founded another *dgon-pa*, called Gong-lding. Apart from Kan-pa'i dpon-po ha-shang sNying-po-dpal, the local sponsors of these buildings were the Bong-tsho lung-pa in Grwa and Bon-po patrons in Lan-bde.

The activity of Man-ston Sangs-rgyas can thus be divided into two phases, both preceded by two interlocutory sojourns not concerning the history of Mang-yul and Gung-thang. He first benefited Gung-thang by preserving its royal lineage. This was preceded by a stay in the Ding-ri area. Then he founded temples in Mang-yul after a sojourn at Sa-skya.

The sequence of Man-ston's sojourns is: 1) Ding-ri (*rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag*); 2) Gung-thang (and briefly sKyid grong) (*Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*); 3) Sa-skya; 4) sKyid-grong.

The sequence of Man-ston's foundations is: 1) Khyung-rdzong dkar-po; 2) bSam-gtan dgon-pa; 3) sPos-sa dgon-pa; 4) Gong-lding dgon-pa.

As mentioned above, Man-ston Sangs-rgyas had a nephew from the maternal side of his family, called 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po in the sources, who was a disciple of bla ma Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa,[52] proving that, in the course of a generation, the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa moved away from Sa-skya-pa affiliation and towards the Tshal-pa.

'Jam-dbyangs chen-po's *yi-dam* was mGon-po phyag-bzhi-pa, which became the *chos-skyong* of the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa.[53] *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* attributes mGon-po to the Byang-chub gling-pa as their *yi-dam chos-skyong*. It was given to the latter family by Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan at the time of his sojourn in sKyid-grong. Given the Sa-skya-pa predilection for Gur mGon-po, it is probable that the Byang-chub gling-pa *chos-skyong* was this form of Ma-ha-ka-la.

Like his uncle, 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po was active in sKyid-grong and, empowered by the *chos-skyong*, embarked upon a campaign of temple building. Only *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* states that 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po founded another monastery in Grwa, called dGon-chung Ka-ru[54] which it defines as Grwa-pa rtsa-ba-can ("the root of the Grwa-pa [family]").[55]

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he went to the east. Having met the Bon-po sponsors, they said: "*Bla-ma rin-po-che*, we will render service to you if you stay here". He said: "[This] land [has good] signs". He stayed at rGya-dpal for some days. During his sleep he dreamt that a pale blue woman in a ray of clear light appeared and requested him: "*Bla-ma-lags*, if you make a *dgon-pa* here, this is excellent since below is a crawling demoness and above (*gong*) is a *lding-chung* (lit. "something small floating"). As he went there and founded a *dgon-pa*, he gave to it the name Gong-lding".

52. The way the sentence in *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* recounting that 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po received teachings from bla-ma Zhang is constructed (ibid. p. 400 line 5: "des sku-tsha 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po'i bla-ma Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa'i drung-du byon-nas thugs-sras-su mdzad") would let one assume that his uncle Man-ston Sangs-rgyas was the disciple of the founder of Tshal Gung-thang. This is denied by the consistent reference to the fact that it was 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po who was bla-ma Zhang's disciple in all the other sources (*rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* and both *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar*).

53. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 3b line 5-f. 4a line 1): "As ['Jam-dbyangs chen-po] meditated one-pointedly, he obtained spiritual powers. After having a vision of the Four-Armed dpal mGon, the latter proclaimed: "I will be your *chos-skyong* from now on. (f. 4a) Meditate on me. You will accomplish your deeds". mGon-po having truly given this prophecy to him, he is still the *chos-skyong* [of this lineage] at present". See also *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 lines 5-6) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 400 line 5).

54. The name dGon-chung Ka-ru bears a striking similarity with lHa-khang dKar-ru established by Jo-bo-rje (see above), but the location of the latter in gNas rules out the possibility that it was a new building phase at Jo-bo-rje's temple, also known as Byams-pa lha-khang.

55. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 4a lines 1-2): "When ['Jam-dbyangs chen-po] went to Lan-bde, he stayed at Grwa. He founded dGon-chung Ka-ru with the sponsors of the Nags-phu-ba. He established Grwa-pa rtsa-ba-can ("the root of the Grwa-pa") [here]". Elsewhere (ibid. f. 6a line 2), the same text has Grwa-sa rtsa-ba-can ("the root of the Grwa land").

There is no general agreement in the sources on the attribution of the foundation of dGon-chung Ka-ru to 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po, for *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar*, unlike *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag*, says that it was his son Rin-chen tshul-khrims who built this monastery.[56] Rin-chen tshul-khrims also founded 'Ga'-lhang dgon-pa.

What they agree on is the sponsorship of Rin-chen tshul-khrims by the Men-Zhang sde-gsum (or "three communities of the Men-Zhang"),[57] the nomadic clan of southern Byang-thang which dominated the events there and in neighbouring territories from the second quarter of the 12th century onward.[58] Therefore, the Men-Zhang had only recently established themselves in this part of the Tibetan plateau at that time.

Nothing more is known of the nature and outcome of this *yon-mchod* relation, but it seems that Rin-chen tshul-khrims was able to exercise a predominant role locally with the help of the Men-Zhang. It would thus ensue that the "three communities of the Men-Zhang" held considerable power in sKyid-grong during that period. There are no clues as to the structure of secular power in 12th century sKyid-grong and, in particular, the relation between rgyal-bu Jo-sras or his successors (if they ever existed) and the Men-Zhang sde-gsum. Like rgyal-bu Jo-sras himself, it seems quite likely that the Men-Zhang were under the power of Gung-thang, as is indicated by the literary material concerning them. This material documents that the Men-Zhang were among the earliest communities (called *mi-sde sgo-bzhi*) which bowed to Gung-thang and formed its political and social backbone (Vitali, "Nomads of Byang and mNga'-ris-smad" p. 1025-1026) (see above n. 58).

The time frame of the *yon-mchod* relation between the Men-Zhang and Rin-chen tshul-khrims seems to be from around the end of the 12th century to sometime in the early 13th, for 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po was a disciple of bla-ma Zhang (1121-1193 or 1194) and Rin-chen tshul-khrims was the former's son. This confirms what is amply documented in the sources on the sTod Tshal-pa (*Mar-lung pa'i rnam-thar*, *Deb-ther dmar-po*, *Chos-legs-kyi rnam-thar* and *Tshal Gung-thang-gi dkar-chag*): that the relations between the Tshal-pa and the Men-Zhang developed in the early period of Tshal-pa history.

There is another interesting statement in the same passage of *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* that Rin-chen tshul-khrims went to found a temple at mThong-mon, presently in the territory of Nepal, which seems to indicate that, in antiquity (and more precisely at least at the end of the 12th or in the early 13th century), the Tibetan world extended further to the south than at present. It is confirmed by the record that a branch of the Khang-gsar-ba belonging to the Byang-chub gling-pa family moved to mThong-mon to form the local *bla-ma* lineage.[59]

56. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 400 line 6): "His son was Rin-chen tshul-khrims. He founded dGon-chung Ka-ru at Gra and various people who gave offerings were the *yon-bdag*. He received an invitation from Mu-kha and founded 'Ga'-lhang dgon-pa".

57. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 4a lines 3-5): "His exalted son Rin-chen tshul-khrims became a master of all the *mDo-rGyud* texts. After he was invited by the Bong-tshogs lung-pa, he was sponsored [by them]. He became the master (*bdag-po*) of Mon-Zhang sde-gsum ("the three communities of Mon-Zhang", sic for Men-Zhang). He founded several *dgon*[*-pa* and] holy places. Having been offered [by the Mon-Zhang sde-gsum] many estates [and] provisions such as seven fields, which, by cultivating [them] (*sbad-pa* sic for *'bad-pa*), give [good] crops, he was asked to own grasslands, mountains and rivers, altogether three".
Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar (p. 440 line 6-p. 401 line 1): "[Rin-chen tshul-khrims] became the *bla-ma* of all the people of Bong-tshogs lung-pa. (p. 401) At mThong-smon, he founded a *dgon-pa* known as bKra-shis-sgang. He became the lord of Mon-Zhang bde-gsum". Both sources also document the patronage of the Bong-tshogs lung-pa, who had supported Man-ston two generations earlier.

58. See Vitali, "Nomads of Byang and mNga'-ris-smad. A Historical Overview of Their Interaction in Gro-shod, 'Brong-pa, Glo-bo and Gung-thang from the 11th to the 15th Century", in H. Krasser, M.T. Much, E. Steinkellner, H. Tauscher (eds.), *Tibetan Studies*, vol. II, (*Proceedings of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Gratz 1995), Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna 1997.

59. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 4a line 4): "Among the Khang-gsar-ba descendance, one [line] went to Rong mThong-smon to be the *mchod-gnas*. This lineage, composed of many *bla-ma* who showed many [signs] of their *sadhana*, still exists there".

The south-ward extension of the Tibetan-speaking world is directly linked with the ancient territorial concept of Bal-Bod, which is a particularly difficult notion to define, given that the extension of Bal-po (the Kathmandu Valley) did not correspond with that of modern Nepal. Hence, the indication that mThong-smon, which is well inside the present Nepali border, was Tibetan in antiquity seems to be meaningful in this respect.

It is a pity that *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* does not specify the names of Khang-gsar-ba members of mThong-smon and does not give any clue to the period in which this transfer took place. One can probably assume that it occurred quite early, but with no way to tell which of the two ('Jam-dpal gling-pa or Khang-gsar-ba) came first.

I will conclude this discussion with a summary of the events in the history of the two families.

A bird's-eye view of the history of the Byang-chub gling-pa would be that its eminent members migrated to dBus at an unspecified date before the construction of bSam-yas. After the temple was completed, they returned home. The history of the family until the 13th century is rather obscure and is only enlightened by two major events affecting sKyid-grong: the visits of Jo-bo-rje A-ti-sha and Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (see below).

A bird's-eye view of the history of the Jam-dpal gling-pa genealogy would be that its most eminent members were active in dBus in the time of the *chos-rgyal mes-dbon rnam-gsum* and served the successive throne holders of the *lha-sras btsan-po* dynasty (probably until its final downfall). They moved to mNga'-ris skor-gsum at an unspecified time (supposedly in the retinue of sKyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon, although this is doubtful) before proceeding to sKyid-grong in the early 12th century, when Man-ston Sangs-rgyas went first to Gung thang and then Mang-yul. The ancestral seat of the family was established by the same Man-ston and its temple by his nephew 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po, who was a Tshal-pa bKa'-brgyud-pa.

sKyid-grong in the time of Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta's visit and thereafter

The third major personage, after Srong-btsan sgam-po and Jo-bo A-ti-sha, to leave an indelible sign on the history of sKyid-grong was Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan who famously encountered and defeated the Brahmanists there. This episode is recounted in many sources which do not originate from sKyid-grong, and is a classic of the Sa-skya-pa literature. The material concerning Sa-paṇ in local sources neglects his assistant in defeating the *mu-stegs-pa*, the less famous but equally important grub-thob mDar-phyar, but introduces the members of the local families who interacted with the Sa-skya-pa master. Both the Grwa 'Jam-dpal gling-pa and the gNas Byang-chub gling-pa offered their services and received teachings when Sa-paṇ, aged fifty-nine at that time, came to sKyid-grong in iron rat 1240 (*bsTan-rtsis gsal-ba'i nyin-byed* p. 146 line 20-p. 147 line 3). Of the two sons of Rin-chen tshul-khrims, bla-chen Nyi-ma (a monk) was the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa who met Sa-paṇ. The master gave him a prophecy, which is behind the name 'Jam-dpal gling-pa, saying that some incarnations of 'Jam-dpal would appear among his successors. From then on, the family was named 'Jam-dpal gling-pa, which came to identify the branch of the clan known as mGos settled in sKyid-grong. The name 'Jam-dpal bde-chen-gling was given to the family temple.[60] The sources entirely omit the identification of the temple which received its definitive name from Sa-paṇ. Following the clue that dGon-chung Ka-ru was the Grwa-pa rtsa-ba-can ("the root of the Grwa-pa") (see above), the present author is inclined to believe that this temple was the object of Sa-paṇ's prophecy.

60. *rTen-gsum gzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 4a line 5-f. 4b line 3): "The elder of the two sons born to him was bla-chen Nyi-ma. During his time, chos-kyi rgyal-po Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta (f. 4b) came to sKyid-grong. When he defeated the *mu-stegs-pa*, [bla-chen Nyi-ma] offered him a golden *'Bum*, [other] innumerable offerings, and was able to render him uncompromising service. He [therefore] received profound teachings on *mDo-sNgags* [from Sa-paṇ]. At the assembly for the celebration after the defeat of the *mu-stegs*, chos-kyi rgyal-po Sa-paṇ said: "In your family there will be many rays of light. They will be incarnations of 'Jam-dbyangs". He gave a prophecy advising to give the name 'Jam-dpal bde-chen-gling to the *dgon-pa*. Likewise [this family] is known as 'Jam-[dpal] gling-pa". This is confirmed by both *Blo-gros chos-'phel-gyi rnam-thar* (p. 283 line 6-p. 284 line 3) and *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 401 lines 2-4).

The section on the Tshal-pa bKa'-brgyud in *Deb-ther dmar-po's* (found almost *verbatim* in *Tshal Gung-thang-gi dkar-chag*) attributes the foundation of 'Jam-dpal-gling to an unnamed disciple of Zhang Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba.[61] The latter master is unfamiliar to me,[62] but he must have hailed from south Byang-thang, where the nomadic clan of Nyag is documented some time after the establishment of 'Jam-dpal-gling.[63] The term *zhang* seems to have honorific implications, but can also be read as the clan name Zhang, thus addressing the Zhang or better Men-Zhang nomads of southern Byang-thang mentioned above, who were predominant over the latter territory as far south as sKyid-grong. The documents presently available on the southern Byang-thang nomads do not confirm the existence of kinship relations between the Men-Zhang and the Nyag.

The activities of 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po (or alternatively, but less probably, Rin-chen tshul-khrims) in sKyid-grong, and especially his other religious foundations do not correspond with those of the unnamed disciple of Zhang Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba. However, this allusion to the foundation of 'Jam-dpal-gling is too coincidental to avoid the suggestion that 'Jam-dbyangs chen-po was a disciple not only of Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa but also of Zhang Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba.

Two members of the Byang-chub gling-pa, Khang-ston 'Od-zer rgyal-mtshan and his brother rDo-rje rgyal-mtshan (who were the sons of 'Bum-dar together with rDo-rje rgyal-po), met Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta and invited him to gNas. They received teachings and were granted an extraordinary statue to be the protector of their lineage.[64] This is the same episode referred to above which led to the appointment of mGon-po as the Byang-chub gling-pa *chos-skyong*.

Finally, Nyi-ma's younger brother, du-dben Shes-rab dbang-phyug, is also briefly discussed in the local documents. It is doubtful that he was a brother of bla-chen Nyi-ma, like the sources say, for he assisted the Gung-thang king 'Bum-lde-mgon in the establishment of the *glang-gi las-stabs bcu-gsum*,[65] in the years 1277-1280, whereas Nyi-ma met Sa-paṇ in 1240. Further, Shes-rab dbang-phyug is credited to have

61. *Deb-ther dmar-po* (p. 147 lines 9-13) and *Tshal Gung-thang-gi dkar-chag* (f. 26b line 6-f. 27a line 1): "Zhang Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba's disciple founded Zhol-bu'i dgon-pa. Since 'Or-ma, Ron and Gung-thang became his sponsors, there was an extensive contribution in favour of the people to be trained. In sKyid-grong too, he founded both the monastery of 'Jam-dpal-gling (f. 27a) and Rin-po-che sPungs-pa, and built a *khag-ni'i mchod-rten* at 'Or-ma'i sa-'gag ("the 'Or-ma gorge")".

62. *Deb-ther dmar-po* (p. 133 line 19) includes 'Bri-ra-ba among Sangs-rgyas-'bum's disciples.

63. See Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang* (n. 713), where a passage from *gNyos lHa-nang-pa'i rnam-thar* referring to the Nyag in 1224 is quoted, and ibid. (p. 428-430) for a discussion of gNyag (spelled as) appearing in *mNga'-ris rgyal-rabs* (p. 77 line 16).78

64. *Byams-pa phun-tshogs-kyi rnam-thar* (f. 3b lines 5-7): "Khang-ston 'Od-zer rgyal-mtshan and his brother invited chos-rje Sa-skya paṇḍi-ta to gNas Byang-chub-gling, who went to see the sKyid-grong Jo-bo when he defeated the Brahmanist 'Phrog-byed dga'-bo ("worshipper of Hindu gods"). Since he remained [here] many months, he thoroughly imparted Tantric commentaries on bDe[-mchog], dGe [Kye-rdor?] [and] *yo-ga*, and instructions on them. *Chos-rje-pa* was glad and said: "Though I have many disciples, since I gave instructions on bDe[-mchog], dGe [Kye-rdor?] [and] *yo-ga*, altogether three, to 'Od-zer rgyal-mtshan and his brother, I entreat you to benefit the teachings as much as possible. Likewise, since you need an especially [powerful] *bstan-srung* in order to control this borderland, I offer you the statue of a *chos-skyong* for this purpose". He gave him a stone in which mGon-po had actually dissolved". Some curious episodes show that other people from sKyid-grong took an interest in this statue and wanted to secure it for themselves (ibid. f. 4a lines 1-2: "The extraordinary image of mGon-po was taken away twice to Sher by the dge-'dun Sher-pa. The first time, on the way, the statue came back while those who were carrying it were sleeping. The second time, it was placed in the Sher-pa'i mgon-khang. When it was put [there], the door was locked. It is well known to everybody that it came back during night time and went to Byang-chub-gling"). An indication of the location of Sher comes from *'Phags-pa Wa-ti'i rnam-thar* (f. 24a lines 5-6) which says: "[Coming] from the *gtsug-lag-khang* [of the] self-originated [statue], between Lan-'de and rGyal-nags, at Sher is Gyes-phug ("the cave of separation") where Bal-mo-za bid farewell and separated [from her people]; and Gu-ru-phug the holy place of Gu-ru". Hence, the statue did not travel far.

65. *rTen-gsum bzhengs-pa'i dkar-chag* (f. 4b lines 3-4): "When the *glang-gi las-thabs* of 'Bum-lde-mgon were established, the younger brother du-dben Shes-rab dbang-phyug actually helped him to achieve [this goal]". See also *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 401 lines 4-5).

accompanied this king's son and successor, Khri-lde-'bum, to the Yuan court to meet Ol-ja-du (on the throne 1294-1307) and receive a seal from him, which makes it more unlikely that the two were actual brothers unless one envisages a conspicuous difference in age between them.[66]

The reason for concluding with the visit of Sa-paṇ, or in its aftermath, is that there is a lengthy gap in the lineages of both the families of sKyid-grong after Sa-paṇ's wondrous defeat of the Brahmanists (e.g. the documents on the 'Jam-dpal gling-pa agree in stating that this gap extended for six generations). For reasons not apparent from the sources, the gap seems to mark an historical divide in the lineal succession of these noble families, thus bringing a long phase in their history to end.

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66. *Ngag-dbang ye-shes-kyi rnam-thar* (p. 401 lines 4-6): "[Shes-rab dbang-phyug] assisted ['Bum-lde-mgon's] son Khri-lde-'bum, when the latter went to China, in obtaining the seal of the seven continents (*dam-ka gling-bdun*). Having become the *bdag-rkyen* ("superior") of the [various] *dpon* of the *rgya-mtsho* (sic for *brgya-tsho* [*bcu-gsum*]), he offered to the self-originated [Wa-ti] ritual implements such as gold and silver butterlamps". See also *rTen gsum bzhengs pa'i dkar chag* (f. 4b lines 4-5). *Gung-thang-gi gdung-rabs* (p. 112 line 14-p. 113 line 7) identifies the Yuan emperor in Ol-ja-du. The meeting must have taken place before 1307 when Ol-ja-du died.

A HITHERTO UNKNOWN VERSION OF THE *PRAJÑĀ-PĀRAMITĀ-RATNA-GUṆA-SAṂCAYA-GĀTHĀ*

Akira Yuyama

Prefatory

It was in September 1979 that I visited China with a group of Japanese specialists in literature, history and art headed by Professor Osamu TAKADA. On my visit to the Turfan Prefectural Exhibition Hall [a] I was greatly surprised to see a tiny fragment exhibited in a showcase. I was extremely excited to learn of a blockprint text of the *Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā* (abbr. *Rgs* hereinafter) in Sanskrit alone. The caption given before the glass showcase described it in Chinese as "A Buddhist sutra in the 'Phags-pa language printed in the Yuan dynasty (1280-1368 CE), discovered at 'Thousand-Buddha Cave' of Bezeklik" [b].

Chinese Blockprint Texts from Peking

Unfortunately, I had no time to study it with care. My repeated plea to take it myself or to obtain a photo of the Hall was rejected. I proposed that I should send my research results for them to use in any way they wished. At least I entreated to be allowed to correct their caption. In the first place I had the impression that the fragment was no other than one of the so-called Peking Street-edition. My immediate thought was that it was probably the one printed in the famed Lamaist Temple Song-zhu-si, alias Fa-yuan-si [c], founded in the fifty-first year of Emperor Kang-xi (1654-1722, reigned 1661-1722) of the Qing dynasty, i.e. 1712 CE, in Peking.

This monastery has long been famous for its publications of multilingual literature, particularly bilingual texts in the Lañ-tsha (or Rañjanā) and Tibetan Dbu-can scripts printed parallel on every other line. A number of these texts are in the Oriental Collection of the Australian National University Library. One of them is a copy of the Diamond Sutra, which was formerly in the possession of the late Professor Xu Di-shan (Taiwan 1893-Hong Kong 1947). He is also well known to us as a writer "Mr. Peanut" [d], and further as the *de facto* editor of the meticulous index to the Chinese Buddhist Canon. It is unfortunate that the latter is not more widely known in the field of Buddhist studies [e]. He wrote the preface on 30 May 1933 at Yenching University (Vol. I, p. iii).

Nevertheless, Xu Di-shan has left an important note on the first page of this blockprint text of the Diamond Sutra that it is a copy of the Peking Song-zhu-si edition. His note is dated September 16, i.e. 1927 CE [f]. Incidentally, I have little knowledge of a large collection of the Peking Street-editions with the exception of that of the late Professor Shirō (alias Shinten) SAKAI of Koyasan. He has made a brief but comprehensive note on his private collection in the *Reports of the Japanese Association for Tibetan Studies*, No. 3 (Osaka 1956), p. 1a-3b.

One may easily recall a Peking blockprint bilingual *Rgs* text (Sanskrit and Tibetan). Several copies are known to exist throughout the world: St. Petersburg, Berlin, Canberra, Kyoto, London and Sendai. A nice photomechanical reproduction has fortunately appeared. A copy kept in the State Library of Berlin was brought back by Erich Haenisch during his stay in Peking in 1928-1929. It is quite possible that he had obtained it at the Song-zhu-si in 1929 (cf. Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. xxvii). It may be added here that the young Berthold Laufer (1874-1934) paid a visit to the Song-zhu-si during his expedition to Peking towards the end of the nineteenth century and recorded it in his enlightening article on Mongolian literature.

This print bears the "Shen" character of the Thousand-Character Numerals [g]. It gives a Sanskrit text in the Lañ-tsha script, with a transliteration and translation underneath in the Tibetan Dbu-can script. As a matter of fact, the so-called Recension B edited by E. Obermiller is based upon this very blockprint text. P. L. Vaidya has published another edition of Recension B. He says that it is based on a single manuscript in Baroda. In this paper I will not repeat the problems posed by various recensions in Indic, Tibetan and

Chinese. In short, however, Recension A of the Indic is represented by a single manuscript kept in the Asiatic Society of Calcutta (cf. Yuyama, *RgsA*, "Bibliographical Notes," p. xxiii-lxxii). It was first revealed to great excitement through the painstaking efforts of Edward Conze and then grammatical studies by Franklin Edgerton.

The blockprint fragment in question was exhibited ninety degrees turned the wrong way round. This must be the reason why it was thought to be a text written in the 'Phags-pa script. This misunderstanding had certainly led them think that it belonged to the Yuan period, which is normally placed from 1271 till 1368 CE. As a matter of fact, the caption mentions not the 'Phags-pa script but 'Phags-pa language. Unfortunately, this fatal mistake is still frequently seen among Orientalists. The 'Phags-pa "script" does belong to the Indo-Tibetan family of scripts. It does not indicate a language nor a word or a sentence. Therefore, it can represent the sounds of any language.

Incidentally, the early history of printing in China has been meticulously discussed. The Buddhists must not have been indifferent towards the advancement of printing in general at the beginning of the eighteenth century, e.g. imperial printers like Cao Yin [h] (1658-1712).

Place of Discovery

It is therefore very unlikely that this fragment could have been discovered at the Bezeklik caves. If the discovery place were in this region, it is quite possible that the fragment was unearthed in the remains of a temple in a village named Sängim (Sheng-jin in Chinese) [i] in the vicinity of the caves. It is well known that modern western expeditions have discovered Indic materials there.

In the meanwhile I had had to give up my idea of studying this fragment of immense interest. Towards the end of 1981 I was browsing through the bookshelves of a library without any specific aim. As a matter of blind chance I found a photograph of the very blockprint same text covering two facing pages in a book published by a Chinese-born Japanese cameraman named Kafuku SEKI (or Shi Jia-fu) [j]. The photo is inserted as it was exhibited in the Turfan Hall. In a dialogue with the late Professor Akiyasu TŌDŌ who envoys a worldwide reputation in Chinese linguistics in particular he gave it as an undeciphered non-Chinese document unearthed from the grave hordes of Astāna: *Tenzan Nanro-o Yuku* (Tokyo 1979) [k], p. 30-31. It seems more doubtful to me to site Astāna as the place of its discovery than Bezeklik.

In any case I should like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Kafuku SEKI, whose precious photograph has made it possible for me to work on the fragment. It is however still a great pity that I have been unable to see the original again or to obtain a better photocopy. Some writings in small letters are illegible. In this blockprint text these letters are found at the end of verses.

'Phags-pa Script / Lañ-tsha Script

Since the fragment was taken as a text written in the 'Phags-pa script, it must naturally belong to the Yuan period. The 'Phags-pa script is so well known as it was called after the name of its deviser, i.e. 'Gros-mgon 'Phags-pa Blo-gros Rgyal-mtshan Dpal-bzang-po, or Āryanātha Matidhvajaśrībhada in Indic form (1235-1280 CE). In the year 1269 he was ordered as the National Preceptor, later Imperial Preceptor, by Khubilai Khan (1216-1294), to devise a new script for the Mongol Empire. The Lañ-tsha, or Rañjanā script, has been popular until today among Buddhists in the Himalayan region in particular.

As a matter of fact, the Lamaist scholars in China were not at all indifferent to foreign scripts. In this connection one may easily recall a well-known concise encyclopaedic work *Rgya-dkar-nag rgya-ser kaśmi-ra bal bod hor-gyi yi-ge dang dpe-ris rnam-grangs mang-ba* by Ārya Paṇḍita Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan in the eighteenth century CE. In fact, this most interesting text was printed in Peking. Fortunately, this was photomechanically reprinted some twenty years ago. There are a number of similar texts printed by blocks in the same manner in Peking. They are all to be found in the same book by Lokesh Chandra.

A Hitherto Unknown Blockprint Text – A Third Indic Version?

Even such a small piece of blockprint fragment preserved at Turfan offers quite a few interesting and important variant readings. It is now not really difficult to reconstruct the text in comparison with the other versions extant in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese: *Rgs* XIV verses 4-8. It is therefore eagerly hoped that this remaining blockprint text will appear before us in the near future. To my knowledge, I have so far seen no report as to the existence of this same blockprint.

The blockprint texts produced at Lamaist temples like Song-zhu-si in Peking seem to be all in Indo-Tibetan pothi-type. But the photograph of the fragment in question looks like an accordion-type print. On the upper part of the fragment are seen handwritten Chinese characters "eleven obverse," i.e. 11a [l]. This handwritten memorandum-type pagination may by itself mean that the text is folded like an accordion printed without pagination, neither a pothi nor a scroll. Incidentally, this numbering is written correctly as one reads the main text. In the showcase it was placed half upside down.

Therefore it is again a great pity that I was not allowed to see and handle the fragment itself and that the photograph does not tell if it had a reverse side with a printed text. The photographer does not mention it in the book. And the paper may have been thick enough not to allow the printing ink to soak through from the back page. Any Tibetologist has the experience of difficulty in reading the prints whose sheets are soaked with ink from the back page and vice versa. If the reverse side of the text were printed, it would no doubt offer important readings we could not overlook.

The text runs from our 11a to the following page without interruption. The size of the fragment is unknown. I was naturally unable to measure it. However, since the last word of 11a, *prāpuṇāti* (XIV 6b end), continues to the next page with the beginning of the next *pāda*, *tañ caiva* (XIV 6c) and one line of the page contains about one and half *pāda*s. The book itself is not really a large accordion folio. The rectangular page consisting most probably of six lines uses a pothi-type form, that is to say, not printed in a western style.

Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā XIV 4-8

In 1984 I reported this fragment in a commemorative volume for Professor Akira HIRAKAWA: *Problems in Buddhist Thought* (Tokyo 1985), p. 443-453 (in Japanese) [m]. There I gave a Romanized text with a reconstructed text and a translation. The present paper intends to be a largely revised English version, employing more materials in the hope that it will draw much greater attention.

On this occasion I wish to give a faithfully transliterated text, and a reconstructed text with textual notes, variant readings found in Recensions A and B, and its Tibetan and Chinese versions. My original plan to present a provisional translation of each version had to be abandoned due to lack of time and space. Edward Conze has made an English translation from the Indic running parallel to the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (abbrev. *AsP* hereinafter). To be frank, although we cannot forget his untiring service, it is a translation made out of the Indo-Tibetan versions. Despite its title, Conze has given the *Rgs* in the first place followed by the *AsP*. After all, he has not settled the question of the relation between the *Rgs* and *AṣP*.

Unfortunately, a photograph of the fragment is not at my disposal for reproduction. Those who are interested in it are requested to consult the book by Kafuku SEKI mentioned above, although some portions in small letters are regrettably illegible, as shown ((...)) in my transliterated text below. Let us hope to see a better copy published by those prudent scholars in charge of such items of our common cultural heritage!

Special Features of the Blockprint Text

This blockprint fragment, though small, offers undoubtedly remarkable features. I herewith cite some interesting phrases and words. Some other interesting readings are treated below.

Verse 6c: *parigṛhṇayimānu*, nom.sg.masc. of pres.pple. to non-causative *gṛhṇayati*, is worth noting from the grammatical point of view. For the nom.sg.ma., ending in *–u*, see Edgerton, *BHSGr* §8.20, Yuyama, *RgsGr* §8.8; cf. Recension A °-*gṛhṇayamānu* and B °-*gṛhṇayamāna*. One may also compare it with BHS **gṛhṇayiyāna*-, pple. (see Edgerton, *BHSGr* §34.5), **gṛhṇayita*-, pple. (see Edgerton, *BHSGr* §34.8), and possibly **gṛhṇayitavya*, gdve. (Edgerton, *BHSGr* §34.20).

Verse 6d (end): *bodhim agryāṃ* is the most exciting example. In both Recensions A and B read *agra-bodhiṃ*, which is a fixed form at the end of the lines of verses. The reading *bodhim agryāṃ* is an admirably beautiful ending for a verse, perfect in grammar and refreshing in metre! Such an alteration of phrases could not occur just by mistake, how much less through poetical ignorance. The composer must certainly have had a talent for prosody.

Verse 7b: *vila[yaṃ up[aiti*, "approaches destruction, breaks, is broken, is damaged": my first reading *vila[yaṃ prayā[ti]*, as in Rec.A, may have to be corrected here, since the sign "*ai*" on top of the missing "*p*" can be read. If so, our fragment agrees with Recension B here, not with A! Manuscripts of Recension B read *vilayam upaiti* (= Obermiller-Vaidya) is unmetrical! It must read *vilayaṃ*, m.c.! This is another good instance where our fragment agrees with Recension B, and not A.

Verse 7d: *-samaṅgi*, nom.sg.fem., with *nāva*, "a ship," fem., in 7c, is supported by Recension A, but not by B *samagram* (see Yuyama, *RgsA* p. 56 ad 7d). This reading is also to be noted in view of the textual transmission.

Verse 8b: *bodhi* (= Rec. A & B), abl., as attested by Tibetan *byang-chub-las-ni*, may have been degraded metrically from the ablative *bodhe / bodheḥ* (cf. Yuyama, *RgsGr* §10.21). In his edition, printed in Devanāgarī, Vaidya may have intended the reading *bodhim*, followed by *upaiti hāniṃ*, as *bodhi-m-* with a hiatus-bridger *–m-*. Otherwise, it does not make sense. Incidentally, *bodhi-* is frequently used in the feminine gender in addition to the masculine (cf. Edgerton, *BHSD* p. 402a, q.v.). In our text are found a number of feminine forms (cf. Yuyama, *RgsGr* §6.27, e.g. *Rgs.A* I 16c *bodhiṃ ... asaṅga-bhūtāṃ*; VII 5d *bodhi śāntā* (accusatives); XIV 4d *paramādbhutāṃ sugata-bodhi*; XVI 3b *nānātva-dharma-vigatāṃ bodhiṃ*; XIX 4c *bodhir iyaṃ* (but with *utpattito*, masc.!): XXXI 2c *bodhim uttama-śivāṃ*.

The above examples, though only a few in number, are good enough to suggest the existence of a third Indic version, if not a recension. In any case this chapter XIV is one I like very much. The famous parable of "*aupamya*" is indeed nicely composed.

Transliterated Text

The small letters illegible on the photo shown as ((...)) below are found only at the end of every verse. They may therefore indicate the verse numbers. Each line of the first folio of the fragment (Seki, *op.cit.*, p. 31) reads as follows:

(1) [...]r[i]gṛhātā bhāva-svabhāva-kuś[a]lā p[a]ra[mārtha-]
(2) [...]na-saṃbhṛta-yāna-pātrā paramādbhutāṃ sugata-bodhi
(3) [...]ṭake apakvi yatha vāri baheya ke cij jñātavyu
(4) [...]ti durbalatvāt pa[r]i[pakv]i vāri ghaṭake vaha=
(5) [...]bhedanād gayam (w.r. for bhayam) upaiti ca [sva]st[i] geham ((...)) kiñcāpi
(6) [...]b[a]hulo siya bodhisatvo prajñā-vihīnu vilayaṃ laghu prāpuṇāti

The next folio (Seki p. 30) reads as follows:

(1) tañ caiva śraddhu parigṛhṇayimānu prajñā atikramya bhūmi-dvaya prā=
(2) psyati bodhim agryyāṃ ((...)) nāvā yathā aparikarma-kṛtā samudre vila=
(3) [...]aiti sa-dha[nā] saha vāṇijebhiḥ sā caiva nāva parikarma-kṛtā
(4) [...]na ca bhidyate dhana-samṅgi upaiti tīraṃ ((...)) em eva śraddhu-pā=
(5) [...]prajñā-vihīnu laghu bodhi upaiti hāniṃ so
(6) [...]mitā s[u]yu[kto] akṣ[ato] nupātu [... ... ...]

Reconstructed Text

[ye te bhavanti vara-prajña-pa]r[i]g<g>ṛhītā
bhāva-svabhāva-kuś[a]lā p[a]ra[mārtha-darśī /
te puṇya-jñāna-dha]na-ṣaṃbhṛta-yāna-pātrā
parādbhutāṃ sugata-bodhi [spṛśanti śīghraṃ // 4 //

gha]ṭake a-pakvi yatha vāri vaheya ko-cij
jñātavyu [kṣpru ayu bhetsya]ti durbalatvāt /
pa[r]i[pakv]i vāri ghaṭake vaha]mānu mārge
na ca] bhedanād bhayam upaiti ca [sva]st[i] gehaṃ // 5 //
kiṃ-cāpi [śraddha-]b[a]hulo siya bodhisatvo
prajñā-vihīnu vilayaṃ laghu prāpuṇāti /
taṃ caiva śraddhu parigṛhṇayimānu prajñā
atikramya bhūmi-dvaya prāpsyati bodhim agryāṃ // 6 //
nāvā yathā a-parikarma-kṛtā samudre
vila[yaṃ up]aiti sa-dha[nā] saha vāṇijebhiḥ /
sā caiva nāva parikarma-kṛtā [su-yuktā]
na ca bhidyate dhana-samaṅgi upaiti tīraṃ // 7 //
em eva śraddhu-pa[ribhāvitu bodhisatvo]
prajñā-vihīnu laghu bodhi upaiti hāniṃ /
so [caiva prajñ-vara-pāra]mitā-s[u]yu[kto]
a-kṣ[ato] 'n-upāhatu [spṛśāti jñāna bodhiṃ // 8 //

Some Other Textual Notes on the Reconstructed Text

For details regarding the variant readings see Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. 55 f. (footnotes). Special features seen in the fragment are discussed above in relation to the complicated problems regarding recensions.

4a. The Tibetan version corresponding to Sanskrit 3cd-4ab is to be found only in the Chinese blockprint text. At some stage of transmission the verses 3cd-4ab may have gone astray so that are missing from the corresponding Tibetan versions in all the hitherto known editions and manuscripts. For further details on the readings see my relevant footnotes in my edition (Yuyama, *RgsA* p. 55).

4a. *pariggṛhītā: parigṛh°* is unmetrical (so also I 6d, XIV 10c, XV 5c, XX 14b, XXIX 4c), cf. Yuyama, *RgsGr* §2.131, Edgerton, *BHSGr* §2.7, *RgsA* p. 37. Another possibility is a hyper-Sanskritic form *parigrahītā*, as is attested in VII 2a *parigrahīta*, nom.sg.f., to **grahati*; also *parigrāhika-* (cf. Yuyama, *RgsGr* §32.36, 40.1; but B: *°gṛhīta*, unmetr.!). Needless to say, the second syllable should be short, m.c.!

4b. *kuśalāḥ*: Rec.B *kuśalo* corresponds to *°-darśī*, which, however, should be taken as plural (as supported by in *pāda* a: *°-pariggṛhītā)*. The same form is attested in XXIV 2b *°-darśī*. The nom.pl.masc. ending in -*ī* (of *in*-stems) is also found in our text: XV 4d *–kathī*; XVII 2a *–bhāṇī*; XVII 4b *vṛṣabhī*; XXI 7c, XXXI 2b *cārī*; XXIX 6a *–śobhī*; XXXI 1a *-abhikāṅkṣī* (cf. Yuyama, *RgsGr* §12.6, Edgerton, *BHSGr* §10.181).

5a,c. Rec.B *°pakṣi* (= ed. Obermiller!) does not make sense! It should be emended to *°pakvi*, so reads our fragment *apakvi, pa[r]i[pakv]i*, so also A; so Tib. *ma btang*, Chin. *bu jian-lao* in 5a [n]; and Tib. *btang-bum-par*, Chin. *jian-lao* in 5c.

Tibetan Versions

The *Rgs* has played a great role in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. Haribhadra headed the list in this connection. He has left with us an important commentary on it. In the Indo-Tibetan tradition he has been quoted as a reviser of the corruptly transmitted text (cf. Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. xvii-xviii).

It is worth noting here that the text has become the most important basic literature to the Zhi-byed-pa School founded by Pha-dam-pa Sangs-rgyas from South India in the twelfth century.

As mentioned above, only the Chinese blockprint bilingual text offers the Tibetan version fully corresponding to the Sanskrit. I have given Tibetan A represented by some Tunhuang manuscripts with variant readings in a brief comparison with B (Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. 172, cf. p. 195). Variant readings found in Recension B are marked with underlines and noted down in the following paragraph. It is, however, not my intention to discuss complicated problems of textual history and canonical status. This applies to the Chinese transmission, too.

[/ gang de shes-rab mchog-gis yongs-su zin-pa-na / (4a)
dngos-po'i rang-bzhin mkhas-shing don dam ston-par byed // (4b)]
/ de-dag thabs-kyi yon-tan shes-rab yongs bzung-ste /
/ mchog-tu rmad byung bde-gshegs byang-chub myur-du reg // 4 //
/ dper-na la-las rdza-so ma btang chu skyed-na /
/ nyam-chung phyir-ni myur-du 'jig-par rig-par bya //
/ so btang bum-par chu skyed lam-du 'jig-pa-yi /
/ 'jigs-pa med-cing bde-bar khyim-du phyin-par 'gyur // 5 //
/ gzhan-yang byang-chub-sems-dpa' dad-pa mang gyur-kyang /
/ shes-rab rnam-par nyams-na myur-du 'jig-par 'gyur //
/ dad-pas shes-rab de-ni yongs-su zin gyur-na /
/ sa gnyis shin-tu 'das-te byang-chub mchog thob 'gyur // 6 //
/ dper-na bcos legs ma byas gru-ni rgya-mtsho'i nang /
/ nor dang bcas-shing tshong-par bcas-te 'jig-par 'gyur //
/ gru de legs-par bcos legs byas dang ldan gyur-na /
/ mi 'jig nor dang bcas-par (v.l. °-te) ngogs-su phyin-par 'gyur // 7 //
/ de-ltar byang-chub-sems-dpa' dad-pas yongs bsgos-kyang /
/ shes-rab med-na byang-chub-las-ni myur nyams 'gyur //
/ de-nyid shes-rab pha-rol phyin-pa mchog ldan-na /
/ ma rmas (v.l. smas) ma nyams rgyal-ba'i byang-chub reg-par 'gyur // 8 //

Variant Readings in Recension B

4ab. As mentioned above, this is found only in the bilingual Chinese blockprint text.
4c. A *bzung-ste*: B *zin-na*.
5c. A *'jig-pa-yi* (some °*-pa'i*, unmetr.): B v.l. °*-pa-yis*.
6a. A *gzhan-yang*: B *de-bzhin*.
6b. A *nyams-na* ... *'jig-par* ... : B *nyams-shing* (v.l. °*-na*) ... *ma-rungs* ... : cf. Skt. °*-vihīnu vilayaṃ* ...
6c. A *dad-pas shes-rab de-ni*: B *de-bas shes-rab-kyis-ni* (v.l. *shes-rab de-ni*).
8d. AB *rmas* (v.l. *smas*; B w.r. *smras*!)!
8d. A *reg-par*: B v.l. (a Tunhuang MS) *sems-dpar*!

Mongolian Versions

The Mongolian versions are preserved as a Kanjur text, Chinese blockprints and probably as *Dhāraṇī* texts (cf. Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. xliv-xlv). I regret very much that I have not been able to study them firsthand, for, when young, I formed the mistaken opinion that Mongolian Buddhist literature, particularly those in the Kanjur, was a mere copy of the Tibetan. I lament my ignorance of the Mongolian language.

In recent years a Japanese Mongolist, Kōichi HIGUCHI of Ehime University in Matsuyama, has been working energetically on Mongolian Buddhist literature and shown us its importance in the history of Buddhism. Being a linguist in the first place, he has demonstrated the existence of three versions of the *Rgs*, i.e. A1, A2 and B, in his enlightening article on the Mongolian versions of the *Rgs* published in the *Tōyō Gakuhō*, LXVII, 1/2 (Tokyo 1987), p. 01(182)-027(156), with an English summary on p. iii [o]. His meticulous work was thereafter published in book form in 1991 [p]. Incidentally, in a collection of his work *Studies of the Influences of the Northeastern Linguistic Situations upon the Mediaeval Mongolian Language in the 13-14th Centuries* (March 1999), v, 100 p. (including a useful bibliography on p. 97-100) [q]. Higuchi has further developed his research into other texts in yet another collection of articles: *Studies of Multilingual Situations in the Mongol Empire Period as Observed in the Loanword System* (March 1997), v, 94 p. (with a useful bibliography on p. 90-94) [r]. They are the *Uṣṇīṣa-vijayā Dhāraṇī*, *Bhadra-caryā-praṇidhāna*, *Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṅgīti*, *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, *Ratnajāli-paripṛcchā* and *Gośṅgavyākaraṇa*. Some of them were published in English, and those appeared in the collected works of his research projects

for the years 1995-1996 and 1997-1998. His comprehensive work on the *Ratnajāli-paripṛcchā* (cf. Ligeti Catalogue No. 919) has been published in book form [s].

His research results tell us that there must have been several routes, not just one rectilinear course from India to Mongolia via Tibet. It may not always simply be via Tibet. This interests me a great deal. I am greatly looking forward to future research work done by such specialists.

Chinese Version

The Chinese version, translated by Fa-xian in 991 CE [t] (cf. Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. xxxix-xliii), corresponding to *Rgs* XIV 4-8, is to be found in Taisho No. 229: Vol. VIII p. 680a13-22. This portion is to be found under the "List of Sino-Japanese Characters" at the end of this paper [u].

APPENDICES: Hitherto Unknown *Rgs* Versions

A Hitherto Unknown Blockprint Tibeto-Sinic Text

In his illuminating article "A Brief Survey of the Buddhist Work – *Āryaprajñāpāramitāratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* – Both in Tibetan and Chinese" (1983), Luo Zhao reports that he discovered a Tibeto-Sinic bilingual text of the *Rgs* in the Peking Office of the famed Yun-ju-si of Fan-shan. It is said to have been translated in the years between 1140 and 1193, in the Tangut period, and reprinted in 1447, during the Ming dynasty. He claims that it must be one of the oldest prints of the Tibetan literature [v]. It is a great pity that I have been unable to check it to see exactly what it is. It may well be a third version both of Tibetan and Chinese! Let us hope to see it appear in facsimile in the near future!

On the other hand, thanks to the fruit of his exhaustive efforts, we are able to see the Chinese version (*op. cit.*, p. 17-36). It is interesting that the text begins in the same manner as the Tibetan translations, i.e. "In Indic it is said: *Ārya-prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā*" in the usual Tantric way of transliterating Chinese characters, followed by its Chinese translation as is given in the title of his article. In fact, the Chinese version is quite different from the one translated by Fa-xian, or Tian-xi-zai. It may be worth noting that this is written all in 11-syllable verses like the Tibetan. It is complete and of great interest. It naturally needs further investigation. Thus, it may also shed light on problematic portions in Fa-xian's version, e.g. its Chinese text II 4 (Taisho VIII p. 677c6-8), corresponding to Sanskrit II 6, has been transmitted in prose!

The fact that the text was found among the Fan-shan materials cannot be ignored in relation to the history of the Chinese Buddhist Canon. It may contribute to an understanding of the relation between the so-called "Stone Sutras" and the Qidan (or Ch'i-tan) edition of the Chinese Da-zang-jing [w], and possibly the Tangut Canon [x]. Herewith I only wish to allude to a notable publication of collected articles on the Stone Sutras at Fan-shan under the editorship of Professor Yasunori KEGASAWA [y].

A Hitherto Unknown Indic Text from Tibet

On his visit to Tibet Luo Zhan discovered a most interesting Indic Rgs palm-leaf manuscript copied by a Chinese monk named Puṇyakīrti: *cīna-deśiya-bhikṣu-Puṇyakīrtti*. This was first introduced by the grand savant Ji Xian-lin in his enlightening article on the *Rgs* (written in May 1988, and now reprinted in his collected works published from Peking in 1991 and from Taipei in 1995). Among many other illuminating viewpoints he discusses the first nine verses of Chapter I (Yuyama, *RgsA*, p. 8-10) in comparison with the Chinese version translated by Fa-xian and that found at Fan-shan. It is a great pity that no further details have been made known to us. Let us hope again to see it appear in some form at no distant date! This may well be another Indic version [z].

List of Sino-Japanese Characters

a 吐魯番縣展示館: "Turfan Prefectural Exhibition Hall".

b 八思巴文仏経印本・元代 (公元 1280-1368 年)・柏孫克里克千仏洞.
"A Buddhist sutra in the 'Phags-pa language printed in the Yuan dynasty (1280-1368 CE), discovered at 'Thousand-Buddha Cave' of Bäzäklik"

c 嵩祝寺／Sōng-zhù-sì /Sung-chu-ssŭ // 法源(淵)寺 Fǎ-yuán(yuān)-sì / Fa-yüan- ssŭ.

d 許地山／Xǔ Dì-shān / Hsü Ti-shan // 落花生 "Peanut".

e 引得編纂處主任・洪業：引得・第十一號: 佛藏子目引得, 三冊 (北平・燕京大學圖書館).

f 北京嵩祝寺板　十六年九月許地山置

g 身／Shēn / Shên.

h 曹寅／ Cáo-yín / Ts'ao Yin.

i Sängim // 勝金 (Shēng-jīn / Shêng-chin).

j 石嘉福 (Kafuku SEKI // Shí Jiā-fú / Shih Chia-fu).

k 天山南路を往く シルクロード　絲綢之路千里 (東京・講談社, 1982).

l 十一上／shí-yī shǎng (shàng) / shih-i shang.

m 湯山明, "梵文宝徳蔵般若木版本断簡", 平川彰博士古稀記念論集・仏教思想の諸問題 (東京・春秋社, 1985).

n 不堅牢／pu chien-lao / bù jiān-láo.

o 樋口康一, "『宝徳蔵般若』の蒙古語訳について", 東洋學報.

p 蒙古語訳『宝徳蔵般若経』の研究 (広島・渓水社, 1991).

q 13-4 世紀の東北ユーラシアの言語状況が中期蒙古語に及ぼした影響の研究.

r 借用形式に観察されるモンゴル帝国期の多重言語状況の研究.

s 蒙古語訳『宝網経』の研究 (東京・多賀出版, 1994).

t 法賢 Fǎ-xian / Fa-hsien (alias 天息災 Tiān-xī-zāi / T'ien-hsi-tsai).

u 大正新脩大藏經, No. 229: Vol. VIII p. 680a13-22:

若人不發堅信心　依於般若求解脱　溺輪廻海無出期　處生老死常苦惱　(4)
若有信心持般若　解有無性見眞如　是人獲福智有財　速證最上佛菩提　(5)
如人擔水用坏器　如不堅牢速破壞　若用堅牢器盛水　而無破壞無憂怖　(6)
不見具信諸菩薩　遠般若行求退墮　能發信心持般若　證大菩提超二地　(7)
未有商人欲入海　不造堅固大船舫　依堅固船無怖畏　獲多珍寶到彼岸　(8)

v 羅照(Luó Zhào /Lo Chao), "藏漢合璧<聖勝慧到彼岸功德寶集偈>考略", 世界宗教研究, 1983 年 4 期, p. 4-36.

w 契丹大藏經／Qì-dān Dà-zàng-jīng / Ch'i-tan Ta-tsang-ching.

x Tangut (黨項)・西夏／Xi-xia / Xī-xià / Hsi-hsia.

y 氣賀澤保規 (編)・中國佛教石經の研究 — 房山雲居寺石經を中心に (京都・京都大学学術出版会, 1996).

z "論梵文本<聖勝慧到彼岸功德寶集偈>", 文化：中国与世界, 第 4 期 (北京：生活・讀書・新知三聯書店, 1988): = 季羨林学術論著自選集 (北京・北京師範学院出版社, 1991), p. 549-608, esp. p. 553 (§1.7); 季羨林佛教學術論文集 (= 中華佛學研究所論叢, IV) (北京・東初出版社, 1995), p. 211-275, esp. p. 215f. (§1.7).

Notes

1. Cf. Walther Heissig, *Die Pekinger lamaistischen Blockdrucke in mongolischer Sprache: Materialien zur mongolischen Literaturgeschichte* (= *Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen*, II) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1954), pp. 4-6 et passim.
2. *Combined Indices to the Authors and Titles of Books And Chapters of Buddhist Literature*. 3 vols. (= *Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series*, XI) (Peiping: Offices in Yenching University Library, March 1933), (vi), xvi, XXV, 266 pp.; (iv), 459 pp.; (iv), 412 pp. — Note that Xu Di-shan's preface is dated 30 May 1933!
3. Cf. A. Yuyama, *Indic Manuscripts and Chinese Blockprints* (*Non-Chinese Texts*) *of the Oriental Collection of the Australian National University Library, Canberra* (= *Occasional Paper Series*, V) (Canberra: Centre of Oriental Studies, Australian National University, 1967), p. 61.
4. Cf. *Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā* (*Sanskrit Recension A*), edited with an Introduction, Bibliographical Notes and a Tibetan Version from Tunhuang by Akira Yuyama (Cambridge / London-New York-Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. xxvii-xxviii. – abbrev. "Yuyama, *RgsA*" hereinafter.
5. *Multi-Lingual Buddhist Texts in Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian and Manchu*, reproduced by Lokesh Chandra from the Collection of Prof. Raghuvira, VI (= *Śatapiṭaka Series*, CCLII) (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1980), pp. 2094-2166. On the margin is found the classification character showing the number, i.e. "Shen" (= folios 1a-109a). The text corresponding to our fragment appears on pages 2122-2124 (= folios 44b-46a).
6. Cf. Manfred Taube, "Zur Textgeschichte einiger gZuṅs-bsdus-Ausgaben," *Zentral-Asiatische Studien*, II (1968), pp. 55-66, esp. p. 55.
7. Berthold Laufer, "Skizze der mongolischen Literatur," *Keleti Szemle*, VIII (Budapest 1907), pp. 165-261, esp. p. 187 f. This informative paper has now been carefully reprinted: *Kleinere Schriften von Berthold Laufer*. Teil I: *Publikationen aus der Zeit von 1894 bis 1910*, herausgegeben von Hartmut Walravens (= *Sinologica Coloniensia*, II) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976), pp. 1120-1216, esp. p. 1142 f.
8. *Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā. Sanskrit and Tibetan Text*, edited by E. Obermiller (= *Bibliotheca Buddhica*, XXIX) (Moscow-Leningrad: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1937) {Photomechanic reprint with a Sanskrit-Tibetan-English index by Edward Conze (= *Indo-Iranian Reprints*, V) (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1960), also reprinted by Biblio Verlag, Osnabrück, 1970, and by the Meicho Fuky¨kai, Tokyo, 1978)}.
9. *Mahāyāna-Sūtra-Saṃgraha*, I (= *Buddhist Sanskrit Texts*, XVII) (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1961), pp. 352-404: Text No. XXII '*Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*' (with critical notes).
10. E. Conze, "The Calcutta Manuscript of the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*," *Indo-Iranian Journal*, IV, 1 (1960), pp. 37-58. – abbrev. "Conze, *RgsA*" hereinafter.
11. F. Edgerton, "The *Prajñā-Pāramitā-Ratna-Guṇa-Saṃcaya-Gāthā*," *Indo-Iranian Journal*, V, 1 (1961), pp. 1-18. – abbrev. "Edgerton, *RgsA*" hereinafter.
12. See esp. *Les débuts de l'imprimerie en Chine* (= *Œuvre posthumes de Paul Pelliot*, IV) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale – Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1953), p. 139: "Appendice: Notes additionnelles sur les éditions imprimées du canon bouddhique," par Paul Demiéville, *ibid*., pp. 121-138.
13. Cf. e.g. *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (*1644-1912*), edited by Arthur W. Hummel. 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office / The Library of Congress, 1943-1944), II, pp. 740b-742b, s.v. *Ts'ao Yin*, esp. p. 741a.
14. See e.g. *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, Teil I. Unter Mitarbeit von Walter Clawiter und Lore Holzmann herausgegeben und mit einer Einleitung versehen von Ernst Waldschmidt (= *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*, X, 1) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1965), pp. XI-XXVI, esp. p. XV. – cf. Review by A. Yuyama, *Indo-Iranian Journal*, XII, 4 (1970), pp. 266-269.
15. Cf. e.g. Miyoko Nakano, *A Phonological Study in the 'Phags-pa Script and the Mĕng-ku tzu-yün* (= *Oriental Monograph Series*, VII) (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1971) – with an extensive bibliography regarding various aspects of the script.
16. Cf. Yuyama, *Indic Manuscripts and Chinese Blockprints* (1967), pp. 84-100, 105 f., 114 and 124; Manfred Taube, *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke*, IV (= *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*, XI, 4) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1966), p. 1087 f.: Nr. 2929.
17. *Indian Scripts in Tibet*, reproduced by Lokesh Chandra from the Collection of Prof. Raghuvira (= *Śatapiṭaka Series*, CCXCVII) (New Delhi: Mrs. Sharada Rani, 1982), Text No. 4, pp. 26-40; cf. M. Taube, *op. cit.*, I (1966), Tafel VI-VII (folios 15a, 16a, 19b & 29b).

18. *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines & Its Verse Summary*, translated by Edward Conze (Bolinas: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973), pp. 9-73 (*Rgs*), esp. p. 34 f. (*Rgs* XIV).
19. I have given a detailed analysis of every metrical scheme in Recension A: A. Yuyama, "Remarks on the Metre of the *Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā*," *Studies in Indo-Asian Art and Culture*, Volume II: *Acharya Raghu Vira Commemoration Volume* (= *Śatapiṭaka Series*, XCVI) (New Delhi 1973), pp. 243-253.
20. See Akira Yuyama, "*Prajñā-pāramitā-ratna-guṇa-saṃcaya-gāthā* of Haribhadra – Preliminary Remarks," *Annual Report of The International Research Institute for Advances Buddhology*, IV (2000) (2001), 16 pp.
21. See Akira Yuyama, "The Inspirational Source of the Zhi-byed-pa Doctrine," *Les habitants du toit du monde: Études recueilles en hommage à Alexander Macdonald* (= *Recherches sur la Haute Asie*, XII) (Nanterre: Société d'ethnologie, 1997), pp. 299-307.
22. See for example, Kooichi Higuchi, "Mongolian Versions of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* from the Linguistic and Philological Viewpoint," (1997), pp. 19-48; "*sartavaki badiri*; a pseudo Sanskrit Form in the Mongolian *Ratnajâli*," *ibid.*, pp. 49-68; "Mongolian Versions of the *Uṣṇīṣavijaya* from the Linguistic and Philological Viewpoint," (1999), pp. 63-76; "Two Unreported Manuscripts of the Mongolian *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* – A Preliminary Report," *ibid.*, pp. 77-93.
23. See e.g. J. Verkerdi, "Some Remarks on Tibetan Prosody," *Acta Orientalia Hungaricae*, II, 2/3 (Budapest 1952), pp. 221-234; cf. P. Poucha, "Le vers tibétain (I-II)," *Archív Orientální*, XVIII, 4 (Praha 1950), pp. 188-235; *ibid.*, XXII, 4 (1954), pp. 563-585.